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THE HELMET.

THE DIVINE PANOPLY;
OR,
A Suit of Armour
FOR
THE SOLDIER OF CHRIST.

With an Introduction

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Take unto you the whole armour of God.—Eph. vi. 13.
Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.—2 Tim. ii. 3.

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INTRODUCTION.

It ought never to be forgotten that the Christian is called to be a soldier, no less than a servant ; to fight manfully under the banner of Christ crucified, as well as to fulfil the course assigned him by his Lord. He cannot do the one, unless he does the other : for to work without warring is impossible, and to war without working would be to beat the air. Christ's church is "militant here on earth." The gates of hell ever assail, though they shall never prevail against her. We are, spiritually, in the position in which the remnant of Israel, who built the wall of Jerusalem in troublous times, were literally—"every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon."

But if we are soldiers of the cross, we must be harnessed for the battle. An unarmed warrior is the sport of his foes. Where then are the weapons of our

warfare? The Captain of our salvation has furnished them for his followers: weapons of heavenly temper; Armour of perfect proof. How exquisite its texture! How complete its parts! There are accoutrements for the whole inward man. No member lacks its piece. We must therefore take to us the "whole Armour of God," that we may "be able to stand in the evil day." But to do so, we must be acquainted with our arms, know their use, and learn how to wear and wield them. Our Panoply must not be to us, as were the arms of Saul to the son of Jesse. He had not proved them. It follows that whatever may help in teaching our "hands to war, and our fingers to fight:" whatever may conduce to our knowledge and skill in handling the weapons of our warfare, ought to have a special interest for us.

There are not wanting several treatises on the Christian Armour. Some of these have obtained large acceptance, and been of signal service in the church. Among them Gurnall's comprehensive and elaborate work stands pre-eminent. It is deeply experimental, and rich in unction. At the the same time, it is needlessly diffuse, and too cumbersome, not to say, too costly, for common readers. There is, still, therefore, room and need for a manual on the subject, combining

brevity with fulness ; condensing the excellences of former works into one, and bringing the whole within the reach of poorer disciples. Such, it is believed, the volume which these remarks introduce, will prove. It is the fruit of the leisure hours of a Christian layman, who is wishful to use the leisure God has given him, for the benefit of the church. Though a compilation, the materials out of which it has been formed were collected from such various fields, and the plan on which the work has been constructed, is so new, that it may be regarded, as, in some sort, an original production. It will be found to contain the pith of Gurnall's voluminous work, together with copious extracts from the writings of Ainsworth, Gurney, Scott, Simeon, and other standard Divines. Besides which, each section is embellished with a graphic, and well-executed illustration of the piece of Armour to which the section relates. Altogether, therefore, it is trusted, that the publication will be found to be as valuable, as it is seasonable. At any time seasonable, is it not specially so, at the present juncture ? For are there not thickening signs that "the evil day" is nigh—that we are verging fast on scenes of conflict, and of trial ? Yes—are they not begun ? "Who then is on the Lord's side ?" Let him gird his Armour round him. Let him stand fast in the faith. Let him "be strong

in the Lord, and in the power of his might." Let him not be afraid. "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

May the Lord of hosts accompany this volume with his blessing! May he make it a word in season to the soldiers of the cross!

H. S.

NOTES ON THE ENGRAVED ILLUSTRATIONS

ON

The Divine Panoply.

HELMET AND CREST.—The cut exhibits the extremes of form observed in the contrivance of this piece of defensive armour. In the Arab chief it appears as a thickly-quilted handkerchief, bound round the temples with a fillet of coloured cords; and in the Greek warrior, as a massive and highly-ornamented skull-cap, capable of protecting the head against the heaviest sabre wounds.

COAT OF MAIL.—The scaled suits of Dacia have been chosen for the engraving, as best calculated to display an early, as well as complete “coat” of body-armour. It will be observed that the horse, like the rider, is clad in garments of mail.

BREASTPLATE.—In the cut, the Egyptian form of boss-covered tippet is given, as the earliest known representation of a military Breastplate.

GIRDLE.—A Roman general and a Persian prince furnish the examples given in illustration: in the former, the Girdle assumes the shape of a jewelled strap, buckled in front; in the latter, as a rich shawl, swathed round the loins.

SHIELD.—The picture shows a square form of a Roman shield, which the soldier wields in defence of a helpless woman and child,—a purpose to which, in protective warfare, it was often devoted.

SWORD.—The engraving exhibits a fine example of the straight double-edged sword used by Greeks of distinction; and in the back-ground is shown the curved form of sword which first appears in the sculptures of Rome.

SPEAR.—The ancient Egyptian and the modern Arabic spears—both of them most formidable weapons—are those shown in the engraving.

BOW AND ARROW.—The examples are taken from the nation, which of all others, made the most deadly use of the bow—the ancient Roman.

GREAVES AND SANDALS.—The engraving shows the commonest forms of these articles of military costume. The former is worn by a Greek—the latter by a Roman.

STANDARD AND BANNER.—In this cut, the artist, rejecting the allegorical and idolatrous forms of standard, has confined himself to the display of a simple “Ensign for the people.” An Egyptian officer is seen “lifting up a Banner against the enemy.”

ARTILLERY.—The engraving represents a party of Roman soldiers on the summit of a bulwark, engaged in casting stones by the aid of a huge Catapulta.

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The Christian's Helmet and Crest.

THE HOPE OF SALVATION.

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The Christian's Helmet and Crest.

THE HOPE OF SALVATION.

B

THE CHRISTIAN'S HELMET AND CREST.

THE HOPE OF SALVATION.

“ Rich Hope of boundless bliss!
Bliss, past man's power to paint it ; time's, to close !
This Hope is earth's most estimable prize ;
This is man's portion, while no more than man :
Hope, of all passions, most befriends us here ;
Passions of prouder name befriend us less.
Joy has her tears, and transport has her death ;
Hope, like a cordial, innocent, though strong,
Man's heart, at once inspirits and serenes ;
Nor makes him pay his wisdom for his joys ;
'Tis all our present state can safely bear,
Health to the frame, and vigour to the mind !
A joy attempered ! a chastised delight !
Like the fair summer evening, mild and sweet !
'Tis man's full cup ; his paradise below !

YOUNG.

Historical Notice.

THE HELMET is a kind of metal cap for protecting the head of the warrior. The salvation of his people is God's Helmet ; the deliverance he intends, and works for them, will appear conspicuous, as if on his head, and He will have the glory of it. Eternal

4. THE CHRISTIAN'S HELMET AND CREST.

salvation, and the hope of it, are their Helmet; they defend and render them bold and courageous in their spiritual warfare.—GURNEY.

Of all kinds of armour, a strong defence for the head was, unquestionably, the most common, and, perhaps, the most early. The shield and Helmet have, indeed, formed the only defensive armour of some nations. When men began to feel the need of a defence for the head in war, they seemed, in the first instance, merely to have given a stronger make to the caps which they usually wore. Such caps were at first quilted, or padded with wool; then they were formed with hard leather; and ultimately of metal; in which state they gradually acquired various additions and ornaments, such as embossed figures, ridges, crests of animal figures, horsehair, feathers, etc., and also flaps to protect the neck and cheeks, and even visors to guard the face. Visors do not, however, appear to have been used by the ancient Orientals; nor do we know any Helmet but that of the Phrygians, with a ridge, or crest. When the dress, or, at least, the war-dress, of ancient people consisted of skins, it was frequently the custom for the wearer to cover his head with the head-skin of the animal; and, long after other dress was adopted for the body, it remained the custom among several nations to wear as a war-cap, or Helmet, the skin of an animal's head, with the hair on, and, in every other respect, as like life as possible. The head-skins of lions, wolves, horses, and other animals, sufficiently grim in their appearance, and with hides of suitable

strength, were preferred for this purpose; and the terrible effect of this head-dress was increased by the teeth being exposed, so as to appear grinning savagely at the enemy. Now, when such people began to find that more convenient war-caps might be invented, they were unwilling to forego the effect which their savage helmets produced, and, therefore, fixed the animal's head, and, ultimately, a representation of it, as conveniently as they could, to the top of their new war-cap.

Count Caylus and sir Samuel Meyrick concur in opinion, that this was the origin of crests, and the other annexations of Helmets. Even the skins of large birds and fishes were employed in the same manner; and we have thus an easy explanation, not only of the Crest, but of the erect ears, horns, wings, etc., which we see in ancient Helmets. The horsehair, which was anciently, and is still, displayed on Helmets, admits of the same explanation. It arose from the custom of wearing the head of a horse with the mane remaining, either proper, or cut short, so as to stand erect like a hog's bristles; the tail also being annexed. The Ethiopians and Libyans had horse-head Helmets; their Egyptian neighbours gave up animal heads for Helmets, but continued them as Crests; the Crest of the royal Helmet, among that people, being, according to Diodorus, the heads of the horse, lion, or dragon. Now, Herodotus says, that the Greeks borrowed their Helmets, as well as their shields, from the Egyptians. But those we have mentioned were far from being the only people who had animal-head Helmets.

Of the Hebrew Helmets, called *coba*, or *koba*, we only know that they were generally of brass ; and that the Helmet of the king was distinguished by its crown. It is, however, interesting to learn that metallic Helmets were, so far as appears, exclusively in use among them. Homer's heroes have also, generally, Helmets of brass. Whether the Hebrews had Crests to their Helmets, or not, it is impossible to say distinctly. We do not think that the crest was a characteristic of oriental Helmets ; but as the royal Helmet in Egypt had a Crest, as the Helmets of Asia Minor were sometimes crested, and as, in the Trojan war, a crested Helmet was worn by the Trojans, and also, it would seem, by the Greeks, it is not unlikely that the Crest was known to the Jews. Plumes we are not to expect ; they were not used in the most ancient periods, and but sparingly in later antiquity.—KITTO.

It will be seen from the above description of the Helmet of the ancients, that the Crest took its rise, in some measure, from the circumstance of retaining the horns of the animal, when the head, etc., was worn on the warrior's cap. The horn was also worn on the head, commonly by the Hebrews, and other oriental nations, as an ornament ; and symbolizes glory, honour, power, brightness, and rays. The face of Moses was encompassed with horns, that is, it was radiant ; or, as it were, horns of light issued from it. The principal defence and strength of many beasts are in their horns ; and hence the horn is often a symbol of strength. The Lord exalted the horn of David, and the horn of his people ; he breaketh the horn of the ungodly ; he

cutteth off the horn of Moab ; he cutteth off in his fierce anger all the horn of Israel. He promiseth to make the horn of Israel to bud forth ; to re-establish its honour, and to restore its vigour. There may be an allusion in these passages, however, to a very common part of the female dress, in some parts of the east. Mr. Buckingham, describing the ornaments of a female at Tyre, says, "She wore, also, on her head, a hollow silver horn, rearing itself upwards obliquely from her forehead, being four or five inches in diameter at the root, and pointed at its extreme ; and her ears, her neck, and her arms, were laden with rings, chains, and bracelets. This peculiarity reminded me very forcibly of the expression of the psalmist : "Lift not up your horn on high : speak not with a stiff neck.—All the horns of the wicked will I cut off ; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted ;" similar illustrations of which, Bruce had also found in Abyssinia, in the silver horns of warriors and distinguished men.—CALMET.

The expression "mine horn is exalted," often occurs in the Bible ; and, doubtless, the reference is to the horn as a general symbol of power and glory. It is, however, remarkable that, whether this were formerly the case or not, some of the women in Syria do wear a sort of horn upon their heads. This is particularly the case among the Druses of Lebanon, speaking of whom, Dr. Carmichael observes, "One of the most extraordinary parts of the attire of their females is a silver horn, sometimes studded with jewels, worn on the head, in various

• Ps. lxxv. 5, 10.

positions, distinguishing their different conditions. A married woman has it affixed to the right side of the head, a widow on the left, and a virgin is pointed out by its being placed on the very crown : over this silver projection the long veil is thrown, with which they so completely conceal their faces, as rarely to have more than one eye visible."—KITTO.

Scripture Illustration.

THERE went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. And he had an Helmet of brass upon his head.^b And Uzziah prepared for them throughout all the host, shields, and spears, and Helmets, and habergeons, and bows, and slings to cast stones.^c

For He put on righteousness as a breast-plate,
And an Helmet of salvation upon his head ;
And he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing,
And was clad with zeal as a cloak.^d
Order ye the Buckler and shield,
And draw near to battle.
Harness the horses : and get up, ye horsemen,
And stand forth with your Helmets ;
Furbish the spears, and put on the brigandines.^e

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand—and take the Helmet of salvation.^f

^b 1 Sam. xvii. 4, 5.

^c 2 Chron. xxvi. 14.

^d Isa. lix. 17.

^e Jer. xlv. 3, 4.

^f Ephes. vi, 13, 17.

But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on—
for an Helmet, the Hope of salvation. §

GOLIATH.^h

Who is this gigantic foe
That proudly stalks along ;
Overlooks the crowd below,
In brazen armour strong ?
Loudly of his strength he boasts ;
On his sword and spear relies :
Meets the God of Israel's hosts,
And all their force defies.

Tallest of the earth-born race,
They tremble at his power ;
Flee before the monster's face,
And own him conqueror :
Who this mighty champion is,
Nature answers from within ;
He is my own wickedness,
My own besetting sin.

In the strength of Jesu's name,
I with the monster fight ;
Feeble and unarmed I am,
But Jesus is my might :
Mindful of his mercies past,
Still I trust the same to prove ;
Still my helpless soul I cast
On his redeeming love. WESLEY.

§ 1 Thess. v. 8.

^h 1 Sam. xvii.

And Hannah prayed, and said,
 My heart rejoiceth in the Lord,
 Mine horn is exalted in the Lord ;
 My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies ;
 Because I rejoice in thy salvation.
 The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth ;
 And he shall give strength unto his king,
 And exalt the horn of his anointed.¹

I have (said Job) sewed sackcloth upon my skin,
 And defiled my horn in the dust.^k

My God (is) my strength, in whom I will trust ;
 My Buckler, and the horn of my salvation,
 And my high tower.¹

I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly :
 And to the wicked, Lift not up the horn.
 Lift not up your horn on high :
 Speak not with a stiff neck.
 All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off ;
 But the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.^m

For Thou art the glory of their strength :
 And in thy favour our horn shall be exalted.
 But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him ;
 And in my name shall his horn be exalted.ⁿ

But my horn shalt Thou exalt, like the horn of an
 unicorn :

I shall be anointed with fresh oil.^o

He also exalteth the horn of his people,

¹ 1 Sam. ii. 1, 10,

^k Job, xvi. 15.

¹ Ps. xviii. 2.

^m Ps. lxxv. 4, 5, 10.

ⁿ Ps. lxxxix. 17, 24.

^o Ps. xcii. 10.

The praise of all his saints.^p

The horn of Moab is cut off,

And his arm is broken, saith the Lord.^q

He hath cut off in His fierce anger all the horn of Israel.

He hath caused thine enemy to rejoice over thee,

He hath set up the horn of thine adversaries.^r

And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us

In the house of his servant David.^s

Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your
heart,

All ye that hope in the Lord.^t

And now, Lord, what wait I for ?

My hope is in thee.^u

Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear
him,

Upon them that hope in his mercy.^w

Why art thou cast down, O my soul ?

And why art thou disquieted within me ?

Hope thou in God : for I shall yet praise him,

Who is the health of my countenance, and my God.^x

Remember the word unto thy servant,

Upon which thou hast caused me to hope.

My soul fainteth for thy salvation ;

But I hope in thy word.

Mine eyes fail for thy word,

^p Ps. cxlviii. 14.

^q Jer. xlviii. 25.

^r Lam. ii. 3, 17.

^s Luke i. 69.

^t Ps. xxxi. 24.

^u Ps. xxxix. 7.

^w Ps. xxxiii. 18.

^x Ps. xlii. 11.

Saying, when wilt thou comfort me ?
 Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live ;
 And let me not be ashamed of my hope.
 I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried :
 I hoped in thy word.
 Lord, I have hoped for thy salvation,
 And done thy commandments.⁷
 The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him,
 In those that hope in his mercy.²

Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills,
 And from the multitude of mountains :
 Truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel.^a
 And I said, My strength and my hope is perished
 from the Lord.
 The Lord is my portion, saith my soul ; therefore will I
 hope in him.
 It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait
 for the salvation of the Lord.
 He putteth his mouth in the dust ; if so be there may
 be hope.^b
 Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope :
 Even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto
 thee.^c

Abraham, who against hope believed in hope.^d
 Through our Lord Jesus Christ : by whom also we have
 access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and
 rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so,

⁷ Ps. cxix. 49, 81, 82, 116, 147, 166.

² Ps. cxlvii. 11.

^a Jer. iii. 23.

^b Lam. iii. 18, 24, 26, 29.

^c Zech. ix. 12.

^d Rom. iv. 18.

but we glory in tribulations also : knowing that tribulation worketh patience : and patience, experience ; and experience, hope ; and hope maketh not ashamed ; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.^e For we are saved by hope ; but hope that is seen, is not hope ; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for ? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.^f If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.^g We through the spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.^h The eyes of your understanding being enlightened ; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.ⁱ Wherefore, remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh,—that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world : but now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.^k We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,—for the hope which is laid up for you in Heaven.^l Christ as a Son over his own house ; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.^m We desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence

^e Rom. v. 2—5.

^f Rom. viii. 24, 25.

^g 1 Cor. xv. 19, 20.

^h Gal. v. 5.

ⁱ Eph. i. 18.

^k Eph. ii. 11—18.

^l Col. i. 3, 5.

^m Heb. iii. 6.

to the full assurance of hope unto the end.—God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath : that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us : which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.^a Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.^o Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be : but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him ; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.^p

Doctrinal Instruction.

HOPE is compared to a Helmet. First : the Helmet defends the head, a principal part of the body, from bullet and sword ; so this “ Hope of salvation ” defends the soul, the principal part of man, and the principal faculties of that, whereby no dangerous impression can, by Satan, or sin, be made on it. Temptations may trouble, but cannot hurt, except their darts enter the

^a Heb. vi. 11, 17—19.

^o 1 Peter, i. 3, 4.

^p 1 John iii. 2, 3.

will, and leave a wound there, by drawing it to some consent and liking of them ; from which this Helmet of Hope, if it be of the right make, and sit sure on the Christian's head, will defend him. It is hard to draw him into any treasonable practice against his prince, who is both well satisfied of his favour at present, and stands also upon the stairs of Hope, expecting assuredly to be called up within a while to the highest preferment that the court can afford, or his king give. Secondly : as the Helmet defends the soldier's head from being wounded, so his heart also from swooning. It makes him bold and fearless in battle, though amidst storms and bullets. Goliath, with his Helmet of brass and other furniture, how confidently and daringly did the man come on, as if he had been so inclosed in his armour, that it was impossible any weapon could come near to deliver a message of death unto him. This made him carry his Crest so high, and defy a whole host, till at last he paid his life for his pride and folly. But here is a Helmet, that whoever wears it, need never be put to shame for his holy boasting. God himself allows him so to do, and will bear him out in this rejoicing of his hope : "They shall not be ashamed that wait for me."^q This made holy David so undaunted in the midst of his enemies. "Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear."^r His hope would not suffer his heart so much as to beat within him, for any fear of what they could do to him ; he had his Helmet of salvation on, and therefore he saith, And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies

^q Isaiah xlix. 23.^r Psalm xxvii. 3.

round about me.”* A man cannot drown so long as his head is kept above water. Now, it is the proper office of hope to do this for the Christian in any times of danger. “When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads ; for your redemption draweth nigh.”† Two things make the head hang down—fear and shame ; hope easeth the Christian’s heart of both these, and so forbids him to give any sign of a desponding mind by a dejected countenance. Grace is subject to decays, and there ever needs completing ; as in an army, especially, which often engageth in battle, their arms are battered and broken ;—one man hath his Helmet bent, another his sword gapped, a third his pistol unfixed ; and, therefore, recruits are ever necessary. In one temptation, the Christian hath his Helmet of Hope beaten off his head, in another, his patience hard put to it. The Christian hath need of an armoury at hand to make up his loss, and that speedily, for Satan is most like to fall on, when the Christian is least prepared to receive his charge.—GURNALL.

Hope, or a scriptural, and prevailing, and animating expectation of victory and eternal glory, must supply the place of a Helmet to cover the head in the day of battle ; by counteracting that discouragement, which doubtfulness of the event would induce, in times of sharp temptation, so that it might be called the Helmet of salvation, as nothing could be courageously done without it. In general, men chose to sleep during the quiet of the night ; and to be drunken or riotous, when

* Psalm xxvii. 6.

† Luke xxi. 28.

others were asleep, that their excess might be the less noticed. In like manner, all sloth, unwatchfulness, intemperance, or excessive worldly pursuits, were more consistent with the condition of benighted heathen, than with that of Christians, who would, as it were, turn the day into night, if they were betrayed into any such practices. As, therefore, they enjoyed the full light of the Sun of righteousness, they ought to be sober and vigilant ; for they had not only a great work to do, but an arduous warfare to maintain, against numerous, potent, active, and subtle enemies. They ought to stand armed like soldiers, and to be vigilant as sentinels : while faith in Christ, and a firm belief of the Divine word, with reliance on the promises, and love to God, to Christ Jesus, to holiness, to each other, and to all men, constituted a breastplate to defend their heart and mind from mortal wounds ; and a well-grounded, realizing hope of eternal happiness and complete salvation, was like a Helmet to cover their heads in the day of battle, to defend them from the fear of the most cruel persecutors. This hope they were warranted to entertain ; as their conversion proved, that God had not appointed them to endure the severity of his wrath, which their sins had deserved, but had chosen them to obtain salvation of his free mercy, through Jesus Christ ; who had willingly suffered death to atone for their sins, and to ransom their souls : that whether they waked or slept, whether they lived or died, or in whatever circumstances they were found at death, or at the coming of their Lord, they might live together with him in glory.—SCOTT.

The generality of mankind have very inadequate ideas of the Christian warfare. They know but little of the enemies with whom we have to contend, or of the imminent danger to which we are exposed through their continual assaults. But as some conception might be formed of the power of an enemy, by viewing the extensive preparations that were made to oppose them, so may we learn to estimate the difficulties of the spiritual warfare, by surveying the various parts of armour which God has prepared for our defence. There are the girdle and breastplate for the body, the greaves for the legs and feet, the shield for the head, in common with the rest of the body: but yet the head is not sufficiently protected; it must have a piece of armour more appropriate—a piece suited to its necessities, and fitted for its use.

In the account given us of Goliath, we read that he had a Helmet of brass upon his head; and such a piece of armour is provided for us also: we are required to take the Helmet of salvation. Hope prepares us for conflicts. A man armed with an Helmet feels himself ready to battle: he fears not to meet his adversary, because he has a defence which, he trusts, will prove sufficient for his preservation. Thus a man that has a Hope of salvation enters into the combat with holy confidence. He is not intimidated by the frowns of an ungodly world, because he knows in whom he has believed, and that God is able to keep that which he has committed to him. He says with David, "Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident." This subject cannot be more strongly

illustrated than in Caleb, and the whole nation of the Israelites. The nation was terrified at the report of the spies, and, instead of proceeding to fight against the Canaanites, proposed to appoint a captain, and go back again into Egypt : but Caleb, whose hope was lively, stood unmoved, and strove to animate his countrymen with an assurance of easy victory. And thus, while the hearts of others are failing them for fear, and they turn back unto perdition rather than contend with their adversaries, the true Christian “encourages himself in his God,” and makes up his mind to die, or conquer.

There is not a more ornamental part of the soldier’s armour than the Helmet; nor is there anything that more adorns the Christian, than a lively, steadfast, and consistent Hope. In the exercise of Hope he stands, as it were, on the top of Pisgah, and surveys the land of promise, the land that floweth with milk and honey. He longs to leave this dreary wilderness, and to enter into the joy of his Lord. Knowing that when his earthly tabernacle shall be dissolved, he has “an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,” he groans earnestly desiring that mortality may be swallowed up of life. If he had crowns and kingdoms in his possession, still he would account it far better to depart, and to be with Christ. He is “looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God ;” and thus has his conversation in heaven, while yet he remains a sojourner upon earth. View the Christian in this frame, and confess, that the sun shining in his meridian strength, glorious as it is, has no glory, by reason of the Christian’s “glory that excelleth.” This—this, Christians is

the state in which you ought to live. Were you more habitually in this frame, your years of warfare would seem nothing for the greatness of the prize for which you contend. You can scarcely conceive what an energy such a frame would give to your souls. You would soon come to Jesus with joy and wonder, like his disciples of old, saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name;" and he, in return, would increase your confidence by saying, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." Do but consider how weak will Satan's temptations be, when you thus abound in Hope! How little will anything be able to move you, when you are thus, by joyful anticipation, 'sitting already with Christ in heavenly places! Beloved brethren, this is your perfection: you will "come behind in no gift," when you are thus "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Whatever you have to do, you will do it heartily, "as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance." May God enable you thus to live, till faith shall be lost in sight, and hope be consummated in enjoyment!—SIMEON.

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE.

What is our Hope? A Helmet bright,
Which, placed upon the head,
Protects it in each fearful fight,
And turns the arrows, sped
By evil hands, by ghostly foes—
The enemies of Faith's repose.

What is our Hope ? An Anchor sure,
That heavenly skill doth form,
Whereby our vessel rides secure,
Though tossed by many a storm :
Nor need the seaman's courage fail,
Since it is cast within the veil.

What is our Hope ? A gentle Dove,
Which, while the sky is dark,
Spreads its fair wings and mounts above,
But soon re-seeks its Ark ;
Bearing some token in its bill,
That peace and joy await us still.

What is our Hope ? The child of Faith—
The nurse of Charity ;
Which flings its radiance over death,
And soothes each labouring sigh,
To which the various woes of earth
Within the pilgrim's breast give birth.

What is the object of our Hope ?
What is the promise given
By that which thus the soul bears up ?—
A heritage in heaven,
Too bright and firm to fade away ;
And Christ himself our trust and stay.

ELLIOT.

HOPE.

Hope, with uplifted foot, set free from earth,
Pants for the place of her ethereal birth ;

On steady wings, sails through the immense abyss,
Plucks amaranthine joys from bowers of bliss,
And crowns the soul while yet a mourner here,
With wreaths like those triumphant spirits wear.
Hope, as an anchor, firm and sure, holds fast
The Christian vessel, and defies the blast.

COWPER.

The Christian's Coat of Mail.

WISDOM AND PRUDENCE.



THE COAT OF MAIL.



THE COAT OF MAIL.

THE CHRISTIAN'S COAT OF MAIL.

WISDOM AND PRUDENCE.

Stand but your ground, your ghostly foes will fly—
Hell trembles at a heaven-directed eye ;
Choose rather to defend than to assail—
Self-confidence will in the conflict fail :
When you are challenged, you may dangers meet—
True courage is a fixed, not sudden heat ;
Is always humble, lives in self-distrust,
And will itself into no danger thrust.
Devote yourself to God, and you will find
God fights the battles of a will resign'd.
Love Jesus ! love will no base fear endure—
Love Jesus ! and of conquest rest secure.

BP. KEN.

Historical Notice.

IN the first book of Samuel, chapter seventeen, we have a graphic description, perhaps the earliest on record, of "a man of war," Goliath of Gath, who is expressly styled "a champion," or, to use a more modern term, a dueller; one who came between the two armies, as wishing to distinguish himself in single combat. Goliath was of the race of Anak. On

the most moderate computation, he was above ten feet high ; and the weight of his armour shews that his bulk and strength were proportionable ; for his coat of mail weighed above two hundred pounds troy weight, and his spear's head in proportion. Some indeed suppose that the price or value was meant ; but the value of anything is generally, if not always, computed by shekels of silver or gold, not of brass. Probably, men in general were about the same size as at present, for such giants then caused as much surprise as they would now. —SCOTT.

We have in the description of Goliath, the first account of what we may call a complete suit of defensive armour ; which naturally gives occasion to some remarks on the subject generally, and on the several parts of armour which we find here specified. Sir Samuel Meyrick says, that body-armour had its origin in Asia. The warlike tribes of Europe at first contemned all protection but their innate courage ; and considered any other defence but the shield, as a mark of effeminacy. He adds, that all the European armour, except the *plate*, which was not introduced till the fourteenth century, was borrowed from the Asiatics. This is of importance, because it enlarges our range of illustration ; since the ancient armour being borrowed from the east, its condition there, is more distinctly illustrated by the information we possess concerning the derived armour of the ancient European nations. The present notice of a suit of armour is the earliest on record, and, to those who interest themselves in the matter, is an important indication of the period when armour had arrived at a state

of some completeness, though it does not enable us to ascertain the period when its several parts were invented. It is evident that armour had, at this time, become not uncommon. Saul himself had armour composed of nearly the same articles as that of Goliath, the use of which he offered to David, who being, from his youth and manner of life, unaccustomed to such warlike harness, preferred to act without such defence. This fact helps to the conclusion, that, as Saul was himself a giant, taller by the head and shoulders than any other Israelite, while David was but a stripling, his intention to make David wear his armour proves that the armour then in use was not so nicely adapted to the size or form of the person destined to wear it, as we find it to have been in later times.

When men had realized a means of protecting their heads by strong caps and helmets, they naturally began soon to think of extending the same protection to other parts of the body. It would be absurd to suppose that every nation adhered to the same rule of progression ; but it may, perhaps, be stated as a general rule, with large variations, that the progressive kinds of armour were — 1. The skins of various animals, and even, in some countries, of birds and fishes. 2. Hides, mats, wood ; linen or woollen, padded or folded ; strong twisted linen. 3. Leather, bordered with metal. 4. Entire plates of metal ; but, as these were heavy and inflexible, various contrivances were resorted to, in order to obtain the security which metal gives, without its rigidity, and without all its weight. For this purpose, the leather was covered with square pieces of metal, riveted on ; or else, embossed pieces of metal were fastened on so as to

protect the more important parts of the person, and to serve at once for ornament and use. Sometimes, also, the defence was formed of bands, or hoops of metal, sliding over each other, and therefore yielding to the motions of the body. 5. We then come to what is properly mailed armour, by which a higher degree of flexibility was obtained, than a metallic covering might be supposed capable of affording. This armour was of several kinds. Leather, linen, or woollen, was covered with rings, or with scales. The rings were of various kinds or sizes, and variously disposed. Sometimes they were fixed independently of each other: in other instances, the rings were twisted into each other, like the links of a chain; and, in some cases, the rings were set edgeways, as shown in the Egyptian hauberks, which Denon copied from the walls of Carnac, and which, in sir S. Meyrick's opinion, affords the earliest known specimen of this kind of armour. Scale-armour was that which obtained the same effect by arranging small pieces of metal, cut into the shape of leaves, scales, etc., in such manner that they fell over each other like the feathers of a bird, or the scales of a fish. This kind of armour had grown into extensive use long before it was adopted by the Romans, who regarded it as a characteristic of barbarians—that is, of any nations except themselves and the Greeks. In the time of the emperors, they were, however, led to adopt it from the Dacians and Sarmatians. This scaled armour was not, however, always of metal; for the last-named people had none such. They were without proper metals, and, therefore, they collected the hoofs of horses, and, after purifying, cut them into slices, and polished the pieces, so as to resemble the scales of

a dragon, or a pine-cone when green. These scales they sewed together with the sinews of horses and oxen; and the body-armour thus manufactured was, according to Pausanias, not inferior to that of the Greeks either in elegance, or strength. The emperor Domitian had, after this model, a cuirass of boars' hoofs stitched together; and this, indeed, would seem better adapted to such armour than the hoofs of horses. With such armour as this of scales, or, indeed, that of rings, any part of the body might be covered; and, accordingly, we see figures covered with a dress of scale, ring, or chain armour, from head to foot, and even mounted on horses, which have the whole body, to the very hoofs, clad in the same manner. The construction of such mailed armour had been brought to a state of astonishing perfection. In some instances, particularly in scale armour, we see figures covered completely in suits fitted to the body with consummate accuracy, and displaying not only the shape of the wearer, but even the muscular parts of the person; that is to say, the armour was so flexible, that it yielded readily to the pressure of the muscles, and to the various motions of the body. Now Goliath's "Coat of Mail" was of scales, and affords the most ancient specimen of scaled armour on record.—KITTO.

The offensive arms which the Hebrews, and other ancients, had for attacking their enemies were, swords, darts, lances, spears, javelins, bows and arrows, slings: their defensive arms for protecting themselves were, helmets, cuirasses, bucklers, Coats of Mail. In Deborah's time, it is probable, Jabin had disarmed the

Israelites ; for neither shield nor spear was to be seen among forty thousand of them.^u In Saul's time, the Philistines had done the same, and entirely prohibited smiths to make them ; hence, no more than Saul and Jonathan had sword or spear.^x It was common to hang up arms in strong, or sacred places : Goliath's sword was hung up in the tabernacle, as a trophy sacred to the honour of God.^y

Armour, when ascribed to God, denotes his all-sufficient fitness for, and the methods and means by which he conquers and defends his people, and destroys his enemies. The spiritual armour of the saints consists of the *shield* of faith,—that is, the reconciled God in Christ we believe on, and the grace of faith whereby we believe in him ; the *helmet* of the hope of salvation ; the *breastplate* of truth, applied to, and integrity wrought in us ; and of imputed and implanted righteousness ; the *girdle* of truth revealed to us, and of uprightness in us ; the *shoes* of the preparation of the gospel of peace ; the *sword* of inspired Scripture ; and the artillery of earnest prayer.^z With these weapons we are to fight against sin, Satan, and the world : and to defend ourselves from their many and dangerous attacks. This armour is called, the armour of God.—GURNEY.

Scripture Illustration.

THERE went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was

^u Judg. v. 8.

^x 1 Sam. xiii. 22.

^y 1 Sam. xxi 9.

^z Eph. vi. 13—20.

six cubits and a span :—and he was armed with a Coat of Mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass.—And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day: give me a man, that we may fight together.—And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?—And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an Helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a Coat of Mail. And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him. And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.—Then said David to the Philistine, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.—And all this assembly shall know, that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands."—And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sank in his forehead, and he fell upon his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone.^a

^a 1 Sam. xvii. 4, 5, etc.

BELIEVERS FIGHTING.

Soldiers of Christ arise,
And put your armour on ;
Strong in the strength which God supplies,
Through his eternal Son :
Strong in the Lord of hosts,
And in his mighty power ;
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts,
Is more than conqueror.

Stand, then, in his great might,
With all his strength endued ;
But take, to arm you for the fight,
The panoply of God :
That having all things done,
And all your conflicts past,
Ye may o'ercome, through Christ alone,
And stand entire at last.

Stand then against your foes,
In close and firm array ;
Legions of wily fiends oppose,
Throughout the evil day ;
But meet the sons of night,
But mock their vain design,
Armed in the arms of heavenly light
Of righteousness Divine.

Leave no unguarded place,
No weakness of the soul ;
Take every virtue, every grace,
And fortify the whole :

Indissolubly joined,
 To battle all proceed ;
 But arm yourselves with all the mind
 That was in Christ, your Head.

To keep your armour bright,
 Attend with constant care ;
 Still walking in your Captain's sight,
 And watching unto prayer :
 Ready for all alarms,
 Set stedfastly your face ;
 And always exercise your arms,
 And use your every grace.

Pray, without ceasing, pray,
 Your Captain gives the word ;
 His summons cheerfully obey,
 And call upon the Lord :
 To God your every want
 In instant prayer display ;
 Pray always, pray, and never faint ;
 Pray, without ceasing, pray. WESLEY.

THE Lord hath opened his armoury,
 And hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation :
 For this is the work of the Lord God of hosts.
 In the land of the Chaldeans.^b

When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his
 goods are in peace : but when a stronger than he shall
 come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him

^b Jer. 1. 25.

all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. He that is not with me, is against me : and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth.^c The night is far spent, the day is at hand : let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.—Put ye on also the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.^d For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh : (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.^e But in all things approving ourselves . . . by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left.^f Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.^g For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily : and ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.^h Labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of

^c Luke xi. 21—23.^d Rom. xiii. 12, 14.^e 2 Cor. x. 3—5.^f 2 Cor. vi. 4, 7.^g Eph. vi. 10—13.^h Col. ii. 9, 10.

God.¹ That thou by them mightest war a good warfare ; holding faith and a good conscience.^k But thou, O man of God, fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.^l Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life ; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet he is not crowned, except he strive lawfully.^m For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith ; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day ; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.ⁿ

Doctrinal Instruction.

THE Christian must be in complete armour, in regard of the several pieces and weapons that make up the whole armour of God. Indeed, there is a concatenation of graces ; they hang together like links in a chain, stones in an arch, members in the body. Prick one vein, and the blood of the whole body may run out at that sluice ; neglect one duty, and no other will do us good. It is not enough to have grace, but this grace must be

¹ Col. iv. 12.^k 1 Tim. i. 18.^l 1 Tim. vi. 11, 12.^m 2 Tim. ii. 3—5.ⁿ 2 Tim. iv. 6—8.

kept in exercise. The Christian armour is made to be worn ; no laying down, or putting off our armour, till we have done our warfare, and finished our course. Our armour and our garments of flesh go off together ; then, indeed, will be no need of watch and ward, shield, or helmet. Those military duties and field graces, as I may call faith, hope, and the rest, they shall be honourably discharged. In heaven we shall appear, not in armour, but in robes of glory ; but here they are to be worn both night and day ; we must walk, work, and sleep in them, or else we are not true soldiers of Christ. This Paul professeth to endeavour :^o “ Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.” Here we have this holy man at his arms, training and exercising himself in his postures, like some soldier by himself, handling his pike, and inuring himself before the battle.—GURNALL.

As the soldiers of Christ they were called to fight under his banner, against Satan, the world, and sin : but they were too weak in themselves for this conflict ; and must therefore be strong in the Lord, by a continual reliance on his mighty power for protection, support, and assistance. In the fulness of Christ, and in the promised influences and assistance of the Holy Spirit, “ a panoply, or complete suit of armour,” was provided for every believer : this the Lord held out, as it were, to the Christians at Ephesus,^p and all others, that, receiving it from him, by the prayers of faith, they might put it on daily, in a diligent and watchful use of the appoint-

^o Acts xxiv. 16.

^p Eph. vi. 10—17.

ed means. Thus armed, they might be able to stand against the assaults of Satan, by whatever artful methods he, or his instruments, attempted to obstruct their progress. For they and all Christians were called to conflict and wrestle, not only against their own indwelling corruptions, the opposition of persecutors, the enticements of wicked men, and the allurements of the world ; but also against those invisible and formidable principalities and powers who rule the darkness of this world—even Satan and his angels, the great authors of man's ignorance, idolatry, delusion, impiety, and iniquity, all over the earth. These might be called "spiritual wickednesses in high places," not only as they held their empire in the air, according to the general opinion, and tempted men to wickedness, especially in their religion ; but, also, as being the authors of all idolatry. Indeed, they became proud rebels and apostates in heavenly places. Having been spiritual wickednesses in that holy world, they were cast out thence ; and had, from the beginning, opposed man's entrance into heaven by every means which malice, sagacity, and subtlety could suggest. It was therefore indispensably necessary for all engaged in this warfare, to be completely armed for the conflict with such powerful and determined enemies, that they might be able to stand in the evil day of peculiar temptation, or persecution, or at the approach of death. They must be prepared every day for the conflict, and would be continually called to resist their foes ; but some days would peculiarly encourage, or give advantage to Satan's assaults. They could not, however, know beforehand, when such occasions would be afforded him, and per-

mission granted him : they must, as vigilant and valiant soldiers, be always ready ; and thus withstanding in the evil day, and having done all, they might stand victorious on the field of battle, and be approved by their great Commander ; as David, having conquered for himself and Israel, stood before the king with the head of Goliath in his hand.—SCOTT.

The Christian's life is frequently represented in the Scriptures under the metaphor of warfare. Christ is called "the Captain of his salvation ;" and they who have enlisted under his banners, and quitted themselves like men, fighting the good fight of faith, and enduring cheerfully all the hardships of campaign, are called "good soldiers of Jesus Christ." Like warriors, they do not entangle themselves with the affairs of this life, that they may please him who hath chosen them to be soldiers ; but they set themselves to war a good warfare, and they look for the reward of victory, when they have subdued all their enemies.

A general must confide in his army fully as much as his army confides in him : for as they cannot move to advantage without an experienced head to guide them, so neither can he succeed in his plans, unless he have a brave and well-appointed army to carry them into execution. It is not thus in the Christian army ; there all the confidence is in the General alone. He must not only train his soldiers, and direct them in the day of battle, but he must be with them in the battle, shielding their heads, and strengthening their arms, and animating their courage, and reviving them when faint, and raising them when fallen, and healing them

when wounded, and, finally, beating down their enemies, that they may trample them under their feet.

It is characteristic of every Christian soldier to receive out of Christ's fulness, and to say, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength." We cannot have a more striking illustration of our duty, in this respect, than the history of David's combat with Goliath. He would not go against his adversary with armour suited to the occasion: he went forth in the name of the God of Israel; and, therefore, he did not doubt one moment the issue of the contest. He well knew that God could direct his aim, and that he was as sure of victory, without any other arms than a sling and a stone from his shepherd's bag, as he could be with the completest armour that Saul himself could give him. What David thus illustrated, we may see exemplified in the conduct of St. Paul. "If God be for us," says he, "who can be against us?" Who is he that shall condemn me? Shall the law curse me, or Satan overcome me? I fear none of them, since Christ has died, yea rather is risen again, and maketh intercession for me. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?—Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Thus it is that we must go forth against all the enemies of our salvation; we must "have no confidence

in the flesh," neither must we have any doubt in our God: the weakest amongst us should boldly say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what men or devils can do against me." "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

To be possessed of courage is not the only requisite for a good soldier; he must be skilled in the use of arms; he must be acquainted with those stratagems which his adversaries will use for his destruction; he must know how to repel an assault, and how, in his turn, to assault his enemy; in short, he must be trained to war. Nor will his knowledge avail him anything, unless he stand armed for the combat. Hence, the apostle, having encouraged the Christian soldier, and inspired him with confidence in the Captain of his salvation, now calls him to put on his armour, and by a skilful use of it, to prepare for the day of battle.

As a skilful general will not attempt to storm a fort on the side that it is impregnable, but will rather direct his efforts against the weaker parts, where he has a better prospect of success; so Satan considers the weak part of every man, and directs his artillery where he may most easily make a breach. If a general knew that his adversaries were harassed with fatigue, or revelling, or intoxicated, amidst the spoils of victory, or separated from the main body of their army, so that they could have no succour, he would not fail to take advantage of such circumstances, rather than attack them when in full force, and in a state of readiness for the combat. Such a general is Satan. If he find us in a state of great trouble and perplexity, when the spirits are exhausted, the mind clouded, the strength enervated, then

he will seek to draw us to murmuring or despair. Thus he acted towards Christ himself, when he had been fasting forty days and forty nights; and again on the eve of his crucifixion. The former of these occasions afforded him a favourable opportunity for tempting our blessed Lord to despondency, to presumption, to a total alienation of his heart from God; the latter inspired him with a hope of drawing our Lord to some act unworthy of his high character, and subversive of the ends for which he came into the world.

Armour is of two kinds, defensive and offensive: the one to protect ourselves, the other to assail our enemy. Now God has provided for us everything that is necessary for a successful maintenance of the Christian warfare. Is our head exposed to the assaults of Satan? there is a helmet to guard it. Is our heart liable to be pierced? there is a breastplate to defend it. Are our feet subject to such wounds as may cause us to fall? there are shoes, or greaves, for their protection. Is our armour likely to be loosened? there is a girdle to keep it fast. Are there apertures, by which a well-aimed dart may find admission? there is a shield which may be moved for the defence of every part, as occasion may require. Lastly, the Christian soldier is furnished with a sword also, by the skilful use of which he may inflict deadly wounds on his adversary.

But here it will be asked, how shall we get this armour? and how shall we put it on? To obtain it, we must go to the Armoury of Heaven, and receive it from the hands of the Captain of our salvation. No creature in the universe can give it us. He, and he only, who formed it, can impart it to us. As when

God had decreed the destruction of Babylon, we are told that "the Lord hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation;" so, when he has commissioned us to go forth against sin and Satan, he must supply us with the arms whereby alone we can execute his will; and we must be daily going to him in prayer, that he would furnish us from head to foot, or rather, that he himself would be our Shield and Buckler, our almighty Protector, and Deliverer.

When we have received our armour, then we are to put it on. It is not given us to look at, but to use: not to wear for our amusement, but to gird on for actual service. We must examine it, to see that it is indeed of celestial temper, and that none is wanting. We must adjust it carefully in all its parts, that it may not be cumbersome and useless in the hour of need: and when we have clothed ourselves with it, then we must put forth our strength, and use it for the purpose for which it is designed. The hour of death is a season when Satan usually puts forth all his power, "having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Now, what shall we do in such seasons, if not clad in the whole armour of God? What hope can we have of withstanding such an enemy! If he should find us unarmed, would he not sift us as wheat, and reduce us to mere chaff? Would he not scatter us as smoke out of the chimney, or chaff driven by a whirlwind? Would he not precipitate thousands of us, as he did the swine, into instantaneous destruction, and into the abyss of hell? But if we be armed with the Divine panoply, we need not fear: he can have no power against us any further than it is given him from above; and,

"howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so," his efforts against us shall ultimately conduce to our good, to make us more humble, more vigilant, more expert.—SIMEON.

SAUL'S ARMOUR.¹

When first my soul enlisted
My Saviour's foes to fight,
Mistaken souls insisted
I was not armed aright.
So Saul advised David,
He certainly would fail ;
Nor could his life be saved,
Without a Coat of Mail.

But David, though he yielded
To put the armour on,
Soon found he could not wield it,
And ventured forth with none.
With only sling and pebble,
He fought the fight of faith ;
The weapons seemed but feeble,
Yet proved Goliath's death.

Had I by him been guided,
And quickly thrown away
The armour men provided,
I might have gained the day ;
But armed as they advised me,
My expectations failed ;
My enemy surprised me,
And had almost prevailed.

¹ 1 Sam. xvii. 38.

Furnished with books and notions,
And arguments and pride,
I practised all my motions,
And Satan's power defied ;
But soon perceived with trouble,
That these would do no good ;
Iron to him is stubble,
And brass like rotten wood.

I triumphed at a distance,
While he was out of sight ;
But faint was my resistance,
When forced to join in fight :
He broke my sword in shivers,
And pierced my boasted shield :
Laughed at my vain endeavours,
And drove me from the field.

Satan will not be braved
By such a worm as I ;
Then let me learn with David,
To trust in the Most High ;
To plead the name of Jesus,
And use the sling of prayer :
Thus armed, when Satan sees us,
He'll tremble and despair.

NEWTON.

The Christian's Breastplate.

RIGHTEOUSNESS.



THE BREASTPLATE.



THE BREASTPLATE.

THE CHRISTIAN'S BREASTPLATE.

RIGHTEOUSNESS.

When Aaron in the holiest place,
Atonement made for Israel's race,
The names of all their tribes exprest,
He wore conspicuous on his breast.

Twelve letter'd stones with sculpture bold,
Deep-seated in the wounded gold,
Glow'd on the Breastplate richly bright,
And beam'd characteristic light.

HART.

Historical Notice.

THE BREASTPLATE was a part of the high-priest's fine apparel. It was a piece of embroidery of about ten inches square, of very rich work, which the high-priest of the Jews wore upon his breast, and which was set with four rows of precious stones, upon every one of which was engraven the name of one of the tribes of Israel. It was double, or made of two pieces folded one upon the other, like a kind of purse, or bag, that it might the better support the precious stones, and that it might receive the Urim and Thummin.—CRUDEN.

This ornament was never to be severed from the priestly garments ; and it was called, "the memorial," being designed to remind the priest how dear those tribes should be to him, whose names he bore upon his heart. It was also named, "the Breastplate of judgment ;" probably, because by it were discovered the judgment and the will of God ;—or, because the high-priest who wore it was the fountain of justice, and put on this ornament when he exercised his judicial capacity in matters of great consequence, which concerned the whole nation.—CALMET.

The Breastplate is likewise a piece of defensive armour, to protect the heart. There is no question that this was the most ancient piece of armour for the protection of the upper portion of the body. When men began to extend to that the protection which the helmet had given to the head, a defence for the breast was naturally the first desired and attempted. This was the principal use of the *thorax*, which for a long time continued to be, under various modifications of form, the sole body-armour of ancient nations ; and which, under further modifications, was used, in addition to other pieces of armour, subsequently introduced. It probably originated with the Egyptians, among whom, according to Meyrick, it was the only body-armour,—a position to which we apprehend that some exceptions must be allowed. It hung over the breast and shoulders in the manner of a tippet, and was made of linen, several times folded, and quilted in such a manner as to resist the point of a weapon. These linen pectorals came into extensive use among the neighbouring na-

tions; and those of Egyptian manufacture were particularly valued. A linen thorax of this kind seems to have been worn, in the Trojan war, by the lesser Ajax, who

“ With a guard
Of linen texture light, his breast secured.”

Sir Samuel Meyrick thinks that the Persians were the first who gave a metallic character to the thorax; and it is also his opinion that it was the principal piece of body-armour among the Hebrews.—KITTO.

The Breastplate of God is Righteousness, which renders his whole conduct unassailable to any accusation. Christians are exhorted to take to themselves “ the Breastplate of Righteousness,”^r and “ the Breastplate of faith and love.”^s Being clothed with these graces, they will be enabled to resist their enemies, and quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.—CALMET.

Faith and love are called Breastplates. Faith is a defensive grace, not only as it assents to the doctrine of the gospel as true, but also as it doth depend upon God’s faithfulness and all-sufficiency to perform his promises, and apply them to our souls for our support and comfort. Love, when it worketh, will defend against the persecutions, afflictions, and temptations of the world. Slavish fear will overcome us, if we want love to defend against it, when true religion is under disgrace, and persecuted in the world. Love will de-

^r Eph. vi. 14.

^s 1 Thess. v. 8.

fend against the apostasy, and so help us to persevere to the coming of Christ ; and love being seated in the heart, is fitly compared to a Breastplate that encompasseth the heart.—CRUDEN.

Scripture Illustration.

AND thou shalt make the Breastplate of Judgment with cunning work ; after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it ; of gold, of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine twined linen, shalt thou make it.—And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the Breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually. And thou shalt put in the Breastplate of Judgment the Urim and the Thummim ; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord : and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually.¹

And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote (Ahab) the king of Israel between the joints of the harness (Marg. reading, between the joints *and the Breastplate*) : wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, "Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host ; for I am wounded."²

For the Lord put on Righteousness as a Breastplate,
And an Helmet of salvation upon his head ;

¹ Exod. xxviii. 15, 29, 30.

² 1 Kings xxii. 34.

And he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing,
And was clad with zeal as a cloak.†

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Stand therefore, having on the Breastplate of Righteousness.* Let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the Breastplate of faith and love.† And they had Breastplates, as it were Breastplates of iron.—And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them had Breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone.‡

AARON'S BREASTPLATE.*

Now let our cheerful eyes survey
Our great High-priest above ;
And celebrate his constant care,
And sympathetic love.

Though raised to a superior throne,
Where angels bow around ;
And high o'er all the shining train,
With matchless honours crowned ;

The names of all his saints he bears
Deep graven on his heart ;
Nor shall the meanest Christian say,
That he hath lost his part.

† Isa. lix. 17.

* Ephes. vi. 13, 14.

† 1 Thess. v. 8.

‡ Rev. ix. 9, 17.

* Exod. xxviii. 29.

Those characters shall fair abide,
Our everlasting trust ;
When gems, and monuments, and crowns,
Are moulded down to dust.

So, gracious Saviour, on my breast,
May thy dear name be worn,
A sacred ornament and guard,
To endless ages borne.

DODDRIDGE,

Doctrinal Instruction.

WHY are Righteousness and holiness compared to the Breastplate ? There is a twofold use that the soldier makes of, and benefit he receives from, this piece of armour. First : The Breastplate preserves the most principal part of the body, and that is the breast, where the very vitals of men are closely couched together ; and where a shot or stab is more deadly than in other parts that are remote from the fountain of life. A man may outlive many wounds received in the arms or legs ; but a stab in the heart, or other vital parts, is the certain messenger of death approaching. Thus Righteousness and holiness preserve the principal part of a Christian, his soul and conscience ; we live or die spiritually, yea, eternally, as we look to our souls and consciences. It is not a wound in estate, credit, or any other worldly enjoyment, that kills us in this sense. These touch not, hazard not the Christian's life, any more than the shaving of the beard, or paring of the nails do the man's : spiritual vitals are seated in the

soul and conscience : it must be a spiritual dagger that stabs these ; and that only is sin, which is said to “ hunt for the precious life.”^b This is the dart that strikes the young man through the liver, who hasteth to his lust, as the bird to the snare, “ and knoweth not that it is for his life.”^c Now, Righteousness and holiness defend the conscience from all wounds and harms, from sin, which is the weapon Satan useth to give the conscience its deadly stab with.

Secondly : The Breastplate, by defending this principal part, emboldens the soldier, and makes him fearless of danger ; and that is as necessary in fight as the other ; it is almost all one, for an army to be killed, or cowed. A dead soldier, slain upon the place, will do, in a manner, as much good as a dead-hearted soldier that is dismayed with fear ; his heart is killed while he is alive ; and a naked breast exposeth the unarmed soldier to a trembling heart ; whereas one, otherwise cowardly, having his breast defended with a plate of proof, will more boldly venture upon the pikes. Thus, righteousness, by defending the conscience, fills the creature with courage in the face of death and danger ; whereas guilt, which is the nakedness of the soul, puts the stoutest sinner into a shaking-fit of fear. “ The wicked flee when no man pursueth : but the righteous are bold as a lion.”^d They say, sheep are scared with the clatter of their own feet as they run ; so is the sinner with the din of his guilt. No sooner Adam saw his plate off, and himself to be naked, but he is afraid at God’s voice, as if he had never been

^b Prov. vi. 26.

^c Prov. vii. 23.

^d Prov. xxviii. 1.

acquainted with him. Never can we recover truly our courage, till we recover our holiness : "If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." ^e

He who means to be a Christian indeed, must endeavour to maintain the power of holiness and righteousness in his life and conversation. This is to have the Breastplate of Righteousness, and to have it on also ; he is a holy righteous man, that hath a work of grace and holiness in his heart, as he is a living man that hath a principle of life in him ; but he maintains the power of holiness that exerts this vigorously in his daily walking, as he the power of natural life in whom the principle of life, seated in the heart, empowers every member to do its particular office in the body strenuously. Thus walked the primitive Christians, "in whose veins," saith Jerome, "the blood of Christ was yet warm ;" their great care was to keep on this Breastplate of Righteousness close and entire, that it might neither loosen by negligence, nor be broken by presumptuous sinning : the character, then, a saint was known by from other men, was his holy walking, (Luke i. 6) : there it is said of Zacharias and Elizabeth, "They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." This was also holy Paul's every day's exercise, "To have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men."^f Never did any more curiously watch the health of their body than he attended to the health of his soul, that no unholiness, or unrighteousness, which is the only bane of it, might distemper or

^e 1 John iii. 21.

^f Acts xxiv. 16.

defile it. And truly, we, who come after such holy ones in the same profession, do bind ourselves to our good behaviour, that we will walk holily and righteously as they did.

Bless God that hath furnished thee with this Breastplate. Canst thou do less, when thou seest such multitudes on every hand slain before thy face, by the destroyer of souls, for want of this piece to defend their naked breasts against his murdering shot? When an enemy comes before a city that hath no walls nor arms to defend it, truly the richer it is, the worse it fares; when Satan comes to a man that hath much of the world about him, but nothing of God in his soul to defend him, oh what miserable work doth he make of such! He takes what he pleaseth, and doth what he will; purse, and all that the poor wretch hath, is at his command. Let a lust ask never so unreasonably, he hath not a heart to deny it; though he knows what the gratifying of it will cost him in another world, yet he will damn his soul rather than displease his lust!

Look, thou keepest thy Breastplate on, Christian. Need we bid the soldier be careful of his armour, when he goes into the field? Can he easily forget to take that with him, or be persuaded to leave that behind him? Yet some have done so, and paid dear for their boldness. Better thou endure the weight of thy plate, though a little cumbersome to the flesh, than receive a wound in thy breast for want of it: let this piece fall off, and thou canst keep none of the other on. If thou allowest thyself in any unholiness, thy sincerity will presently be called into question in thy conscience. I confess we find that Peter, a little after his sad fall

in denying of his Master, had the testimony of his uprightness. "Lord, thou knowest all things ; thou knowest that I love thee."^g After Christ had thrice put it to the question, he could confidently vouch his sincerity ; but we must know, first, that sin was not a deliberate sin—the poor man was surprised on a sudden ; and, secondly, there had intervened his bitter sorrow between his sin, and this his profession ; and the renewing of his repentance so speedily, conduced much to the clearing of his sincerity to his conscience. But David found it harder work, who sinned more deliberately, and lay longer soaking in his guilt, as you may perceive,^h where he pleads so earnestly that God would renew a right spirit within him.—GURNALL.

Righteousness, or an habitual and conscientious obedience to the various commandments of God, should be their Breastplate, which would defend them from fatal wounds in the day of conflict : whereas, conscious negligence and disobedience would render them afraid to face persecution or death in the cause of Christ. If we would serve the Lord in this evil world, we must depend on him for strength, as well as for instruction, and a merciful acceptance. Our enemies indeed are mighty, and we are without strength ; but our Redeemer is almighty, and in the power of his might we may overcome all who oppose our course. Let us then daily put on the armour which the Captain of our salvation has prepared for us ; that, being sober and

^g John xx. 17.

^h Psalm li. 10.

vigilant, and always ready for the battle, we “may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” The potent rulers of the darkness of this world, who wrought spiritual wickedness in heaven, will oppose our march to that inheritance which they have lost, and endeavour, if possible, to bring us to that hell to which they are condemned. They often have powerful allies in the principalities of the earth, and wicked men always fight under their banner: but our flesh, the corrupt nature, the traitor in the camp, is our most dangerous foe; while fear of present suffering, and desire of present gratification, gain, honour, or distinction, continually war against our souls. We must, therefore, engage in this warfare as men in earnest, habitually expecting the onset of our foes, either by open violence, or deeply laid stratagems. Some fiery darts will every day be thrown at us, to inflame our passions, or distress our hearts: but evil days of peculiar danger or difficulty must be expected; and we shall not be able to withstand in them, “and, having done all, to stand” as conquerors before our Captain, unless we be constantly armed for the fight. The soldier who is secure in the enemy’s country, will probably be assaulted, and shamefully worsted, when he least expects it.

Let us seriously inquire, whether we really be the children of the light and of the day, by Divine illumination, and by an obedient faith. Let us seek to render this evident, as well as to act consistently with our profession, by casting off the works of darkness, and shaking off indolence and carelessness; that we may not sleep as others do, but may watch and be sober.

Let us leave sloth, self-indulgence, ungodliness, and worldly lusts, to the children of the night and of darkness : but let us, who profess to be of the day, be sober, vigilant, circumspect, and armed with the Breastplate of faith and love, and with Hope as the Helmet of salvation. Thus our evidence will continually increase, that God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by the Lord Jesus ; and that, whether we wake or sleep, we shall surely live together with him. And when we remember, that he purchased our deliverance from the wrath to come, by dying on the cross, as a sacrifice for our sins, we shall not only be directed how to comfort ourselves together, and to edify one another in our most holy faith ; but we shall feel the constraining power of admiring, adoring, grateful love ; and learn how to live to him, with whom we hope to live for ever in glory.—SCOTT.

As various parts of armour, however differing in shape, may be formed of the same materials ; so among the Christian graces, there may exist a considerable resemblance, while yet there remains between them a manifest distinction. Righteousness is that particular grace which comes under our consideration at this time. By Righteousness, we understand that true and universal holiness which is characteristic of conversion, and constitutes that Divine image after which we are renewed. Now this, though nearly allied to sincerity, differs materially from it : sincerity relates to the aims and motives of a person ; but Righteousness to his actions and habits. Righteousness is that in actual attainment which sincerity is in desire and purpose. Right-

eousness cannot exist without sincerity ; but sincerity may, and often does, exist without Righteousness, because it may be found in blind zealots, and bloody persecutors.

The piece of armour to which Righteousness is compared, is the Breastplate, which was of use to defend the vitals from the assaults of an enemy. Of such importance was it to every one in the time of battle, that all, from the general to the soldier, were clad with it ; nor can its importance to us more strongly appear, than from the consideration, that the Captain of our salvation, even the Lord Jesus Christ himself, was thus arrayed. The prophet Isaiah, speaking expressly of him, says, " He put on Righteousness as a Breastplate." In the metaphor before us, the apostle intimates that without Righteousness we should be exposed to imminent peril, yea, to certain death ; but that if we be clad with Righteousness, our adversaries will never be able to prevail against us. The apostle would not have been so urgent in exhorting us to put on the Breastplate of Righteousness, if he had not believed that it would answer all the purposes for which it was designed. That it will protect us, we are well assured ; that it will secure to us the victory, there can be no doubt ; for it will turn depravity to sanctity, cowardice to courage, and weakness to strength. Thus, wherever the soul is clad with Righteousness, it is emboldened both to do and suffer the will of God ; and, consequently, Satan's engine of persecution, whereby he has destroyed myriads, being divested of its power to intimidate the righteous, his dominion over them must for ever cease.

What shall we now say to you who are destitute of this armour? Shall we congratulate you on your prospects of victory? Shall we even flatter you with the hopes of escaping with life? We cannot, we dare not. There is a possibility that you might vanquish an armed host with a broken pitcher, or make the walls of an impregnable fortress to fall with the sound of rams' horns; but to succeed without Righteousness in your spiritual warfare is impossible; for the truth of God is pledged that you shall perish if you continue in your unrighteous state. "Awake to Righteousness, and sin not." Let your earnest prayer ascend up before God, that you may be made "new creatures in Christ Jesus," and be turned effectually "from the power of Satan unto God."

To you who have the armour of Righteousness on the right hand and on the left, we say, "Stand fast in the Lord." Let nothing prevail upon you to lay aside your Breastplate for one moment; the instant you part with it, you are shorn of your strength, and are become weak as other men. "Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."¹ Thus shall your subtle adversary be foiled in all his attacks; he shall never be able to inflict on you any deadly wound. Then shall you not be ashamed when you have respect unto all God's commandments. As the Righteousness of Christ sustained him amidst the fiercest assaults of his enemies, so shall you be preserved whilst fighting under his banners, and following his commands. His express promise to you is, "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh Righteousness, shall never be moved."² And

¹ Rev. iii. 11.

² Psa. xv. 2, 5.

again, "The Lord God is a sun and a shield ; the Lord will give grace and glory ; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." ¹—SIMEON.

"Be strong in the Lord, and the power of his might,"
He leads through the desert, still guiding aright ;
Complain not, though weeds o'er thy wilderness spread,
And dark may the cloud be that hangs o'er thy head.

Remember the word to the faithful of old:—

"I will help, I will strengthen, yea, I will uphold ;
The right arm of my Righteousness, that is my stay,
My love is thy pole-star by night and by day.

I chose thee before earth's foundations were laid :
An infant, a sufferer, for thee I was made ;
I hung on a cross, and I lay in a grave,
The souls of my chosen to bless and to save.

Unfailing my promise, eternal my love,
And firm is the throne that awaits thee above ;
I am ready to give thee a welcome, and thou,
My trembler, what sayest thou? answer me now."

Oh what is the answer? I lie at thy feet ;
I cling to thy promise, thy words I repeat ;
Convinc'd of my sin, self-accus'd, self-abhorr'd,
Yet never despairing—for thou art my Lord.

The Lord will conduct by a way yet unknown,
And seat me at last by his side on his throne ;
The Lord hath redeem'd, and he never will lose
The soul that he died thus to pardon and choose.

¹ Psa. lxxxiv. 11.

Safe, safe to eternity, waiting awhile,
Upheld by thy power, and refresh'd by thy smile ;
Each moment the nearer to home in the skies,
Each moment the louder let praises arise. EMRA.

The Christian's Girdle.

TRUTH AND FAITHFULNESS.



THE GIRDLE



THE GIRDLE

THE CHRISTIAN'S GIRDLE. .

TRUTH AND FAITHFULNESS.

Truth, eldest daughter of the Deity !
Truth of his council when he made the worlds,
Nor less when he shall judge the worlds he made ;
Though silent long, and sleeping ne'er so sound,
Smothered with errors, and oppressed with toys,
That Heaven-commissioned hour no sooner calls,
But from her cavern in the soul's abyss,
Like him they fabled under Ætna whelmed,
The goddess bursts in thunder and in flame,
Loudly convinces, and severely pains.—
Ye deaf to truth, peruse this parsoned page,
And trust, for once, a prophet and a priest :
“ Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die.”

YOUNG.

Historical Notice.

THE HEBREWS generally wore no Girdle in the house, nor even abroad, unless they were at work, or upon a journey. At these times, they girt their clothes about them, as the Eastern people still at this day wear them. This appears from many passages of the Old and New Testament. Elijah “girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab ;”^m and Elisha ordered his servant Gehazi to gird up his loins, and to go and lay his staff on the face of the Shunamite's child.ⁿ Our Saviour, preparing himself

^m 1 Kings xviii. 46.

ⁿ 2 Kings iv. 29.

to wash the feet of his disciples, girt himself about with a towel.^o The soldiers likewise had their belts generally girt about them, to which the Psalmist alludes, "Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle."^p

Belts, or Girdles, were often made of very precious stuffs. The virtuous wife made rich Girdles, and sold them to the Canaanite, or Phœnician merchants.^q These Girdles were used in common, both by men and women ; but the women's are more frequently called *zonæ*.^r We may judge of their value, by the kings of Persia sometimes giving cities and provinces to their wives, for the expense of their Girdles. Our Lord, appeared to John "with a golden Girdle"^s; noting the excellency of his ministration as Priest. And in Rev. xv. 6, the seven angels who came out of the temple were clothed with linen, and girt about "with golden Girdles." On the contrary, the prophets and persons who made particular professions of humility and contempt of the world, wore Girdles of skins, or leather. The prophet Elijah had one of this sort, as well as John the Baptist. In times of mourning, they used Girdles of ropes, or sackcloth, as marks of humiliation and sorrow. God threatens the daughters of Zion, who had offended him with the excess of their ornaments, to reduce them to the wearing of sackcloth.^t And in Isaiah xxii. 12, the Lord threatens Jerusalem with bringing her into captivity, with cutting off her hair, the instrument of her pride, and obliging her to gird herself about with sackcloth.

^o John xiii. 4.

^q Prov. xxxi. 24.

^r Rev. i. 13.

^p Psal. xviii. 39.

^r Ezek. xvi. 10.

^t Isa. iii. 24.

The priests' Girdle, or sash, was of several colours, of gold, of blue, of purple and scarlet, and fine twined linen.^u Josephus says, that the priests wore it upon their breasts, under their arms : that a kind of flower-work was there represented, with threads of scarlet, purple, and hyacinth ; that it went twice round the body, was tied before, and the ends hung down to the feet, to render the priests more venerable. When they were in the act of sacrificing, they threw this Girdle over the left shoulder, that they might perform their office with the greater freedom. The Girdle was used formerly for a purse, as appears from Matt. x. 9, where our Saviour forbids his disciples to carry money in their purses, or Girdles. These Girdles were large and hollow, much like the cast skin of a serpent, or an eel.

The military Girdle, or belt of the Hebrews, did not come over the shoulder, as among the old Greeks, but was worn upon the loins ; whence the following expressions have their original : " Every man had his sword girded by his side," or upon his loins.^v " Girded with Girdles upon their loins."^x These belts were generally rich, and sometimes given as rewards to soldiers. Joab tells him who had seen Absalom hanging on a tree, that if he had smitten him to the ground, he would have given him ten shekels of silver, and a Girdle. Jonathan, the son of Saul made David a present of his Girdle. Job, exalting the power of God, says, " He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a Girdle ;^y he deposeth them from their thrones, and reduceth them to a mean and servile condition.—CRUDEN.

^u Exod. xxviii. 4—8.

^v Neh. iv. 18.

^x Ezek. xxiii. 15.

^y Job xii. 18.

The Girdle was of more importance with the thorax only, or with the short corselet, than with the cuirass which covered the abdomen. It was a part of their armour on which the ancient warriors set high value. It was often richly ornamented ; and the gift of a warrior's Girdle to another was a testimony of the highest consideration. Thus it was not forgotten to state that Jonathan gave his Girdle to David ; and we read in the Iliad, vii. 305, that when Hector and Ajax exchanged gifts, in testimony of friendship, after a hard combat together, the latter presented the former with his Girdle. It is often mentioned in Scripture ; and from its use in keeping the armour and clothes together, and in bearing the sword, as well as from its own defensive character, to gird, and to arm, are employed as synonymous terms.—KITTO.

Our Saviour says, "Let your loins be girded about ;"^z that is, be always prepared for any service that God requires of you, and diligent about it : be like servants who are girded, and ready to obey their master's commands ; or like soldiers, who wait for orders from their commanders. The apostle Paul, describing the Christian's armour, makes truth the Girdle of the loins, "Having your loins girt about with truth ;"^a that is, let your minds and spirits be strengthened and established with soundness of judgment and sincerity of heart, and in stedfastly endeavouring to have a conscience void of offence towards God and men.—CRUDEN.

^z Luke xii. 35.

^a Eph. vi. 14.

Scripture Illustration.

AND they made coats of fine linen of woven work for Aaron, and for his sons . . . and a Girdle of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, of needle-work ; as the Lord commanded Moses.^b And he (Moses) put upon him the coat, and girded himself with the Girdle, and clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod upon him, and he girded him with the curious (marg. reading, embroidered) Girdle of the ephod, and bound it unto him therewith.^c And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his Girdle.^d And Joab said unto the man that told him, "And, behold, thou sawest him, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground, and I would have given thee ten shekels of silver, and a Girdle ?^e And Joab's garment that he had put on was girded unto him, and upon it a Girdle with a sword fastened upon his loins in the sheath thereof ; and as he went forth it fell out.^f And the king of Israel answered and said, "Tell him (Benhadad,) Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off."^g Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching : verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth, and serve them.^h

^b Exod. xxxix. 27, 29.^c Lev. viii. 7.^d 1 Sam. xviii. 4.^e 2 Sam. xviii. 11.^f 2 Sam. xx. 8.^g 1 Kings xx. 11.^h Luke xii. 37.

HE looseth the bond of kings,
And girdeth their loins with a Girdle.
He poureth contempt upon princes,
And looseth the Girdle of the strong.^k

Gird up now thy loins like a man ;
For I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.^l

It is God that girdeth me with strength,
And maketh my way perfect.
For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle :
Thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against
me ^m

All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth
Unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.ⁿ

Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing ;
Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with
gladness.^o

Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens ;
And thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.^p
I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart ;
I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation :
I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth
from the great congregation.^q

Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O Most Mighty,
With thy glory and thy majesty.
And in thy majesty, ride prosperously
Because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness ;
And thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.^r

ⁱ Marginal reading.

^l Job xxxviii. 3.

ⁿ Ps. xxv. 10.

^p Ps. xxxvi. 5.

^k Job xli. 18, 21.

^m Ps. xviii. 32, 39.

^o Ps. xxx. 11.

^q Ps. xl. 10.

^r Ps. xlv. 3, 4.

Thou hast given a banner to them that feared thee,
That it may be displayed because of the truth.^a

Which by His strength setteth fast the mountains ;
Being girded with power.^t

Mercy and truth are met together ;
Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.^u

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever :
With my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to
all generations.

For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever :
Thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.
And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord :
Thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.
O Lord God of Hosts, who is a strong Lord, like unto
thee ?

Or to thy faithfulness round about thee ?
But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him ;
And in my name shall his horn be exalted.
Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take
from him,

Nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.^v
He shall cover thee with his feathers,
And under his wings shalt thou trust ;
His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.^x
Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him,
And for a Girdle wherewith he is girded continually.^y

I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right,
And that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

^a Ps. lx. iv

^t Ps. lxxv. 6.

^u Ps. lxxxv. 10.

^v Ps. lxxxix. 1, 2, 5, 8, 24, 33.

^x Ps. xci. 4.

^y Ps. cix. 19.

Thy faithfulness is unto all generations ;
 Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.
 Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness,
 And thy law is the truth.

Thou art near, O Lord,
 And all thy commandments are truth.^a

Hear my prayer, O Lord,
 Give ear to my supplications :
 In thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness.^a

None shall be weary nor stumble among them ;
 None shall slumber nor sleep ;
 Neither shall the Girdle of their loins be loosed,
 Nor the latchet of their shoes be broken.^b

And righteousness shall be the Girdle of his loins,
 And faithfulness the Girdle of his reins.^c

O Lord, thou art my God ;
 I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name ;
 For thou hast done wonderful things ;
 Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.^d

I am the Lord, and there is none else ;
 There is no God beside me :
 I girded thee (Cyrus) though thou hast not known me.^e

None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth :
 They trust in vanity, and speak lies ;
 They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.
 And judgment is turned away backward,
 And justice standeth afar off :
 For truth is fallen in the street,
 And equity cannot enter.

^a Ps. cxix. 75, 90, 142, 151.

^a Ps. cxliii. 1.

^b Isa. v. 27.

^c Isa. xlv. 5.

^d Isa. xx. 1.

^e Isa. xlv. 5.

Yea, truth faileth ;
 And he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey.^f
 Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem,
 And see now, and know, and seek
 In the broad places thereof,
 If ye can find a man,
 If there be any that executeth judgment,
 That seeketh the truth ; and I will pardon it.
 O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth ?
 Thou hast stricken them—but they have not grieved ;
 Thou hast consumed them—but they have not received
 correction :
 They have made their faces harder than a rock ;
 They have refused to return.^g
 They bend their tongues, like their bow, for lies :
 But they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth ;
 For they proceed from evil to evil,
 And they know not me, saith the Lord.^h
 It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed,
 Because his compassions fail not.
 They are new every morning : great is thy faithfulness.ⁱ
 I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness :
 And thou shalt know the Lord.^k

THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER.^l

Gird thy loins up, Christian soldier,
 Lo ! thy Captain calls thee out :
 Let the danger make thee bolder ;
 War in weakness ; dare in doubt.

^f Isa. lix. 4, 14, 15.^g Jere. v. 1. 3.^h Jere. ix. 3.ⁱ Lam. iii. 22, 23.^k Hos. ii, 20.^l Ephes. vi. 11.

Buckle on thy heavenly armour ;
 Patch up no inglorious peace :
 Let thy courage wax the warmer,
 As thy foes and fears increase.

Bind thy golden Girdle round thee,
 Truth to keep thee firm and tight :
 Never shall the foe confound thee,
 While the Truth maintains thy fight.
 Righteousness within thee rooted,
 May appear to take thy part ;
 But let Righteousness imputed,
 Be the Breastplate of thy heart. HART.

Doctrinal Instruction.

“What is truth ?” Some by truth understand Christ, who indeed is elsewhere called “Truth;” yet in this place I conceive not so properly, because the apostle instanceth here in several pieces and parts of armour, one distinct from another ; and Christ cannot so well be said to be a single piece to defend this or that part, as the whole in whom we are complete ; compared therefore to the whole suit of armour ; “Put ye on the Lord Jesus;” that is, be clothed and harnessed with Christ, as a soldier with his armour *cap-a-piè*. Some, by Truth, mean, truth of doctrine ; others will have it, truth of heart, sincerity ; they I think best, that comprise both. Both, indeed, are required to make the Girdle complete ; one will not do without the other. It is possible to find good meanings, and a kind of

sincerity without, yea, against the Truth. Many follow an error, as those who followed Absalom, in the simplicity of their hearts. Such do ill while they mean well. Good intentions do no more make a good action, than a fair mark makes a good shot by an unskilful archer. God did not like Saul's zeal when he persecuted the Christian church, though he thought, no question, he did him good service therein. Neither is it enough to have Truth on our side, if we have not Truth in our hearts. Jehu was a great stickler against idolatry, but kicked down all again by his hypocrisy. Both then are necessary; sincerity to propound a right end, and knowledge of the word of truth, to direct us in the right way to that end.

The loins must be like the Girdle. This is spiritual, and therefore they must be so. Peter will help to interpret Paul; "Gird up the loins of your minds."^m They are our minds and spirits which must wear this Girdle, and very fitly may our spirits and minds be compared to the loins. The loins are the chief seat of bodily strength. Of Behemoth it is said,ⁿ "His strength is in his loins." The loins are to the body as the keel to the ship; the whole ship is knit to that, and sustained by it, and the body to the loins: if the loins fail, the whole body sinks. Hence, to "smite through the loins," is a phrase to express destruction and ruin; weak loins, and a weak man. If we be but a little weary, nature directs us to lay our hands on our loins to sustain them, as our chief strength. Thus, as the actings of our minds and spirits are in their faculties

^m 1 Peter i. 13.

ⁿ Job xl. 16.

and powers, so we are weak or strong Christians : if the understanding be clear in its apprehension of truth, and the will sincere, vigorous, and fixed in its purposes, for that which is holy and good, then he is a strong Christian. But if the understanding be dark, or uncertain in its notions, as a distempered eye that cannot well discern its object, and the will be wavering and unsteady, like a needle that trembles between two loadstones, not able to bring its thoughts to an issue, which to close with ; here the man is weak, and all he doth will be so. Feeble spirits cause an intermitting, faltering pulse ; so, want of strength in the mind, to know truth, and resolution in the will to pursue that which he knows to be holy and good, causes a man to falter in his course. The use, therefore, of these two, truth of doctrine for the mind, and sincerity for the will, is to unite and establish both these faculties, which they do when they are clasped, and girt about the soul, as the girdle about the loins of the body. Though the loins be the strength of the body, yet they need an auxiliary, their strength from the girdle, to keep those parts close, and unite their force, without which, men, when they would strain themselves, and put forth their strength in any work, find a trembling and looseness in their loins. Hence, the shaking of the loins is a phrase to express weakness.* Thus our minds and spirits need this girdle to strengthen them in every work we do, or else we shall act nothing vigorously.

Let us be stirred up to get the Girdle of Truth close girt to us, that we may be able to hold fast the pro-

* Ps. lxi. 23.

fession of it, even in the face of death and danger, and not be offended when persecution ariseth. Blessed be God ! it is not yet come to that ; we have the truth at a cheaper rate ; but how soon the market may rise, we know not. Truth is not always to be had at the same price. Buy it we must at any, but sell it upon no terms. And let me tell you, there hath been, is, and will be, a spirit of persecution in the hearts of the wicked, to the end of the world ; and as Satan was considering Job, before he laid his foul hands upon him, so now persecution is working in the spirits of the ungodly ; there are engines of death continually preparing in the thoughts and desires of Satan and his instruments, against the sincere professors of the Truth ; it is already resolved upon what they would do, might power be given, and opportunity to put their malice in execution ; yea, we are already half way towards a persecution. Satan comes first with a spirit of error, and then of persecution ; he first corrupts men's minds with error, and then enrageth their hearts with wrath against the professors of Truth. It is impossible that error, being a child of hell, should be peaceable ; it would not then be like its father. That which is from beneath, can neither be pure nor peaceable. And how far God hath suffered this sulphureous spirit of error to prevail, is so notorious, that no apology is broad enough to cover the nakedness of these unhappy times. It is, therefore, high time to have our Girdle of Truth on ; yea, close girt about us in the profession of it. Not every one that now applauds Truth will follow it, when once it comes to show them the way to prison ; not every one that preacheth for it, or disputes for it, will suffer for it.

Arguments are harmless things, blunt weapons, they fetch no blood ; but when we suffer, then we are called to try it with Truth's enemies at sharps. This requires something more than a nimble tongue, a sharp wit, and a logical head : where then will be the wise, the disputer, the men of parts and gifts ? Alas, they will, like cowardly soldiers, be wanting in the fight, though they could be as forward as the best at a muster or training, when no enemy was in the field ; when to appear for Truth was rather a matter of gain, or applause, than loss and hazard. No, God hath chosen the foolish to confound the wise in this piece of service ; the humble Christian, by his faith, patience, and love to the Truth, to shame men of high parts, and no grace.

Sincerity, or truth of heart, may fitly be compared to a Girdle, in regard to the two-fold use and end for which a Girdle, especially the soldier's belt, is worn. First : The Girdle is used as an ornament put on uppermost, to cover the joints of the armour, which would, if seen, cause some uncomeliness. Here, at the loins, I mean, those pieces of armour, for the defence of the lower parts of the body, are fastened to the upper ; now, because they cannot be so closely knit and clasped, but there will be some little gaping betwixt piece and piece, therefore they used to put over those parts a broad girdle that covered all that uncomeliness. Now sincerity doth the same for the Christian, what the Girdle doth for the soldier. The saint's graces are not so close, nor his life so exact, but in the best there are found infirmities and defects, which are as so many gapings and clefts in his armour ; but sincerity covers all, that he is neither put to shame for them, nor

exposed to danger by them. Secondly: The Girdle was used for strength; by this the loins were stayed and united, and the soldier made stronger to fight or march; as a garment, the closer it sits, the warmer it is; so the belt, the closer it is girt, the more strength the loins feel; hence God, threatening to enfeeble and weaken a person or people, saith, "Their loins shall be loosened." "I will loose the loins of kings;"^p and "He weakeneth the strength of the mighty."^q He looseth the Girdle of the strong. Now sincerity may well be compared, in this respect, to the soldier's Girdle. It is a grace that doth gird the soul with strength, and makes it mighty to do or suffer. Indeed, it is the very strength of every grace; so much hypocrisy as is found cleaving to our graces, so much weakness. It is sincere faith that is the strong faith. Sincere love that is the mighty love. Hypocrisy is to grace, as the worm is to the oak—the rust to the iron; it weakens them, because it corrupts them.

The second ground, or reason of the metaphor, taken from the other use of the soldier's Girdle, which is to strengthen his loins, and fasten his armour, over which it goes, close to him, whereby he is able to march, and strong to fight. Girding, in Scripture phrase, imports strength. "Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle." "He weakeneth the strength of the mighty;" in the Hebrew it is, "he looseth their girdle;" to which use of the girdle, sincerity doth bear a fit analogy. It is a grace that establisheth and strengthens the Christian in his whole course; as, on

^p Isa. xlv. 1.

^q Job xii. 21.

the contrary, hypocrisy weakens and unsettles the heart: "a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." As it is in bodies, so in souls. Earthly bodies, because mixed, are corruptible; whereas the heavenly bodies, being simple and unmixed, they are not subject to corruption. So much a soul hath of heaven's purity and incorruptibleness, as it hath of sincerity, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord, Jesus Christ in sincerity," with incorruption.* The strength of every grace lies in the sincerity of it; so that the point that offers itself to our consideration, from this second notion of the Girdle, is this,—that sincerity doth not only cover all our other infirmities, but is excellent, yea, necessary, to establish the soul in, and strengthen it for, its whole Christian warfare. "The integrity of the upright shall guide them, but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them."† The hypocrite falls shamefully, and comes to nought with all his shifts and stratagems to save himself; whereas, sincerity carries that soul safe, that dares follow its conduct above all dangers, though in the midst of them.—GURNALL.

The minds of Christian soldiers ought to be fortified, and prepared for the assault, by conscious sincerity in their profession, and by Truth in their whole conversation; as the loins of soldiers were girded by their military belt, when they marched out to the battle. Habitual sincerity in professing and obeying the truth, and uprightness towards God and man, must be the

* Eph. vi. 24.

† Prov. xi. 3.

Girdle of our loins, and the breastplate in this important warfare ; but then our feet must also be "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." In the constant exercise of vigorous faith, and lively hope, we shall possess our impenetrable shield, and our helmet of salvation : while with the sword of the Spirit, even the word of truth, we may drive our enemies before us, and seek the victory for ourselves and our fellow combatants.

True faith simply credits "the sure testimonies of God," as "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance," and relies on his immutable truth, to perform his promises ; and thus the believer anticipates, and praises the Lord for future blessings, as if already in possession. This faith influences every possessor to holy obedience and spiritual worship ; and if we can on this ground be confident that the Lord is our God and Portion for ever, this will animate us with the desire of exalting and praising him among our fellow Christians, and fellow sinners, here on earth. All his wonderful works of creation, providence, and redemption, accord to his eternal counsels and decrees. He has already proved many of these counsels, which he revealed to his servants the prophets, to be "faithfulness and truth ;" and in due time all the rest will be evidently accomplished.—SCOTT.

Among the various parts of a soldier's armour, a Girdle was of very principal importance ; and in this view it is frequently mentioned in the Holy Scriptures. The Prophet, describing the irresistible fury with which the Chaldeans should overrun Palestine, says, "None

shall be weary or stumble among them, none shall slumber or sleep ; neither shall the Girdle of their loins be loosed." And our blessed Lord, who, as the Captain of our salvation, was arrayed like all the soldiers of his army, is represented by the same prophet as habited in this manner : " Righteousness shall be the Girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the Girdle of his reins."

The use of the Girdle was to keep the armour compact, and to strengthen the loins : and these are the offices which truth performs for the Christian soldier. In the first place, it compacts all the graces with which his soul is armed. As the different parts of armour with which the body is fortified would hang loose, and leave many apertures through which a wound might be inflicted, if they were not fastened together by a belt or Girdle : so would the Christian's graces prove insufficient for his defence, if they were not all compacted together by the Girdle of sincerity. Let us look at persons that seemed armed from head to foot, and prepared to defy all the powers of darkness. See Johanan and the remnant of the Jews, whom the Chaldeans had not taken into captivity, coming to the prophet, entreating him to ask counsel for them from God, and vowing in the most solemn manner to comply with any direction which the Lord should give them by his mouth. We have not a more hopeful appearance in all the sacred records : but they dissembled with God ; no sooner was the answer given them, than they shewed by their conduct that they were not sincere in their overtures, and they became the victims of their own hypocrisy. And how often are similar failures found

amongst ourselves from the very same cause ! How many appear penitent and determined to serve their God while they are under some heavy calamity, or in the near prospect of death, and yet discover their hypocrisy as soon as ever their professions are brought to the test ! Yet daily is that account of the Jews realized amongst ourselves : "When he slew them, then they sought him, and inquired early after God. And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant."

On the other hand, how impenetrable to the darts of the adversary were the graces of those who were sincere before God ! Daniel not only would not relinquish, but would not so much as abate, or conceal his devotions, though menaced with a cruel and speedy death. Nor would the Hebrew youths comply with the edict of a haughty monarch, though they saw a furnace heated for their destruction, and might have pleaded in their defence the example of a whole nation. Thus shall we also be enabled to brave every danger, and to endure death in its most awful forms, if our hearts be upright before God. As all our graces will be compacted together by sincerity, so every distinct grace will derive from it tenfold solidity and strength ; let our faith be unfeigned, our love without dissimulation, and our spirit altogether without guile, and we need fear no assault, however artful, however violent. The other office of truth is, to strengthen our souls under great and long-continued conflicts. This par-

ticular use of the Girdle is repeatedly mentioned by the psalmist. In reference to himself he says, "Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle." In reference to the Messiah also, he uses a similar expression : "The Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself."

Let us be on our guard against those devices whereby Satan would weaken our sincerity, or rob us of the comfort of it. Satan will put forth all his wiles, and exert all his power, to loosen this Girdle. He well knows that if he succeed in this point, all the rest will be easy, but that till this be effected, we are invulnerable. He will therefore try on all occasions to get advantage against us. He will cover his endeavours with the most specious pretexts, and present his temptations in the most alluring shapes. But let us watch against him ; let not the example of an apostle, or the preaching of an angel, lead us to renounce one single truth, or to transgress one single precept. If we be not continually on our guard, that serpent will beguile us ; yea, in spite of all our watchfulness, will he deceive us, if we be not preserved by God himself. Let us therefore watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation. But if Satan cannot entice us to lay aside our Girdle, he will endeavour to deprive us of the comfort of it. He will take occasion from our remaining infirmities, to make us think ourselves hypocrites ; and thus he will seek to effect that, through despondency, which he could not effect through any other temptations. Let it then be our daily care so to fasten this Girdle round our loins, that we may have in ourselves, and give to all around us, an indisputable evidence that we

both possess and improve it. Then shall we have a consolation arising from it, and rejoice in "the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity . . . we have had our conversation in the world."

Lastly : Let us stand thus armed, and be in constant readiness to oppose our enemy. Let us not fear him, but resist him manfully. If we fight, we have nothing to fear : it is only when we turn our back that we are left exposed to any mortal injury : in every other part we are armed sufficiently for our defence. Let us then beg of God to put truth in our inward parts. Let us add to our faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness, charity, and keep them all compact with the Girdle of Truth ; then have we God's promise that we shall never fall. Through his grace, our integrity and uprightness shall preserve us. "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end." Only let us be sincere, and we shall be without offence till the day of Christ.
—SIMEON.

GOD'S FIDELITY.*

Now let the feeble all be strong,
And make Jehovah's arm their song :
His shield is spread o'er every saint,
And thus supported, who shall faint ?

What though the hosts of hell engage
With mingled cruelty and rage ?
A faithful God restrains their hands,
And chains them down in iron bands.

* 1 Cor. x. 13.

Bound by his word, he will display
A strength proportioned to our day ;
And, when united trials meet,
Will shew a path of safe retreat.

Thus far we prove that promise good,
Which Jesus ratified with blood :
Still is he gracious, wise, and just,
And still in him let Israel trust.

DODDRIDGE.

The Christian's Shield and Buckler.

FAITH.



THE SHIELD.



THE SHIELD

THE CHRISTIAN'S SHIELD AND BUCKLER.

FAITH.

Faith builds a bridge across the gulf of death,
To break the shock blind Nature cannot shun,
And lands thought smoothly on the farther shore.
Death's terror is the mountain Faith removes,
That mountain barrier between man and peace.
'Tis Faith disarms destruction, and absolves
From every clamorous charge the guiltless tomb.

YOUNG.

Historical Notice.

THE SHIELD is unquestionably the most ancient and most general piece of defensive armour in the world. When it was first invented we cannot say; but it is mentioned in the Bible long before Helmets or other defensive armour. It is the only defensive armour mentioned in the books of Moses. The Egyptians, as usual, claim the honour of the invention; and before it was discovered, men probably endeavoured to break the force of blows by doing what Diodorus tells us the first kings of Egypt did, investing their persons with the skins of lions and bulls. Among the means for this

purpose, the superior convenience and efficacy of such a contrivance as a Shield, could not fail soon to occur to the mind: and accordingly, there is hardly any nation in which the Shield, in some form or other, is not employed. Savages, who have not the least idea of such defences as the helmet, or cuirass, are yet seldom found without the Shield.

There are three, if not four sorts of Shields mentioned in Scripture; or, at least, there are four names by which they are distinguished. The largest seems to be that called *tzinnah*, which was twice the size of the ordinary Shield, as we learn from 1 Kings, x. 16, 17, and 2 Chron. ix. 15, 16, where 600 shekels of beaten gold were employed in the construction of the one, and 300 shekels in the other. Formidable as this weight of metal for the *tzinnah* is, it probably does not give an approximating idea of its full weight, and still less of its size, as Shields were almost never wholly of metal, but were of wood, or skin, covered with metal. We may suppose the *tzinnah* to answer to the larger kind of Shields which were used in ancient nations. Concerning these and other ancient arms there are very complete indications in Homer's *Iliad*. Among his heroes, as well as in other times and nations, these larger Shields were chiefly used by persons fighting on foot. Their length was nearly equal to that of a man, as we gather from several passages in that old poet; thus he says of Hector:—

“So saying, the hero went, and as he strode,
The bull-skin border of his bossy shield
Smote on his heels, and on his neck behind.”

The same fact is implied in the intimations which we find of the bodies of the slain being carried on a Shield ; as in the famous injunction of the Spartan mother to her son, "Either bring back this Buckler, or be brought back upon it." This refers also to the sentiment of honour connected with the preservation of the Shield. It was natural enough for a man, when escaping, to desire to disencumber himself of such a burden and encumbrance as the larger kinds of Shields were : and therefore the sentiment of honour was brought in, and made it disgraceful to lose the Shield under any circumstances. The civilized Greeks and Romans, and the barbarous Germans, equally shared this sentiment. Among the latter, those who left their Shields in the enemy's power, were excluded from civil and religious privileges, and often sought a release from ignominy in a voluntary death. The Hebrews participated in this feeling : and David, in his fine elegiac Ode on the death of Saul and Jonathan, does not omit to mention this among the subjects of national regret—

"Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew,
Neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings :
For there the Shield of the mighty is vilely cast away."^u

The length of these Shields seems to show that they were either oblong or oval ; and that they were hollow, which implies external convexity, we gather from their being described as inclosing or encompassing the body. Homer has such expressions, and so has David, "With favor wilt thou compass him as with a Shield,"^v which

^u 2 Sam. i. 21.

^v Ps. v. 12.

seems to prove the analogy in this respect. Tyrtæus, in one of his hymns still extant, is very precise on this point : "The warrior stands in the contest firm upon both feet : the hollow of the spacious Shield covering, below ; his sides and thighs, and his breast and shoulders, above." The manner in which these large heavy Shields were used, may be collected by a comparison of the different passages in Homer. They were supported by a leathern thong which crossed the breast. So Agamemnon advises the warriors to "brace well their Shields," and foretells that before the approaching battle is over,

Every Buckler's thong,
Shall sweat on the toiled bosom.

And so in the battle itself, Pallas finds Diomedes beside his chariot,

"Cooling the wound inflicted by the shaft
Of Pandarus ; for it had long endured
The chafe and sultry pressure of the belt,
That bore his ample Shield."

His wound was on the right shoulder ; whence we may infer that the belt hung from that shoulder, and crossed the breast to the left side, where it was attached to the Shield, which could, of course, be moved at pleasure, behind or in front. Lighter Shields had sometimes a thong fastened to the handle, by which they were hung round the neck, and carried in any convenient position when not in use, upon the arm, at the back, or even at the hip. In action, and indeed often out of action, Shields of different sizes were carried and swayed by means of a handle fixed to its inner surface ; or if

large, by two loops or handles, through one of which the arm was passed while the hand grasped the other. In marching, it must have been thrown behind, as we see from the instance of the margin of Hector's Shield smiting his heels as he walked. In marching immediately to the assault, it was, however, sometimes turned entirely in front ; the warrior then advanced like Mars,

“ Behind his broad Shield pacing ;

but then the length of the Shield obliged the owner to walk with short steps like Deiphobus :—

“ Tripping he came, with shortened steps, his feet
Sheltering behind his Buckler.”

This also shews its length, and seems, at the same time, to prove that its weight prevented it, under such circumstances, from being held at such a distance before the body, as to allow the free action of the feet. The weight of the larger kind of Shield rendered it so great an incumbrance to a person otherwise heavily armed, that persons of consideration had an attendant, whose principal business it was to carry the Shield of his superior. And this he did, not merely when it was not wanted, but in action he sometimes marched before the warrior, to ward off the missiles which were aimed against him. The warrior of course sometimes took it himself when in close action. David was made Saul's armourbearer. Jonathan's armour-bearer took a very active part in his master's exploit against the Philistine garrison.* Goliath had an armourbearer, who carried

* 1 Sam. xiv. 7.

his great Shield before him.* Arrian relates that Alexander had the Shield which had been taken from the temple of the Trojan Pallas carried before him in all his wars. The large Shields were of great service, when a body of men, acting in concert, joined their Shields, and opposed, as it were, a wall against the assault of the foe. In attacking fortified places, the soldiers also joined their Shields over their heads, to protect themselves from the missiles which were discharged upon them by the besieged. This was called the *testudo*, or tortoise, because the soldiers were thus covered from the weapons of their enemies, as a tortoise by its shell. This invention was exhibited in various forms, which ancient authors describe. That it was known to the Jews, appears from Ezek. xxvi. 8, where the king of Babylon is described as lifting up the Buckler against the city of Tyre. To render this junction of Shields the more compact, the Roman legions had their *scutum*, with squared sides. It was of an oblong form (Polybius says, generally four feet long, by two and a half broad), with a convexity given to its breadth. This Shield, though it seems to have been reduced by the Romans to a comparatively moderate size, may be taken as an average representative of the class of large Shields, and may therefore be put into the same group with the Hebrew *tzinnah*. But the square form being intended to assist united action, we are not to expect to find it so prevalent among Orientals and Barbarians, who trusted less to the effect of combined action than did the Romans : and to an individual,

* 1 Sam. xvii. 6, 7, 45.

a square Shield with its sharp angles, is less convenient than one more or less of a rounded figure. Hence, we seldom find Shields other than round or oval, among the Orientals, either ancient or modern ; the Egyptians, however, had their Shield in the shape of a tombstone.

Another Hebrew Shield was the *magen*, which is the first that the Scripture mentions,⁷ and seems to have been that which was most commonly in use, being conveniently portable, and perhaps really more useful than the large one ; for although it did not protect the whole person, it could be turned with facility to ward a coming blow or missile. This kind of Shield is generally mentioned in connexion with arrows and swords ; but the *tzinnah* with spears. It was about half the size of the latter, as we see that Solomon only appropriated 300 shekels of gold for the manufacture of a *magen*, but 600 for a *tzinnah*. Among the ancients, the lesser Shield seems to have been always used by horsemen, and persons who fought in chariots, and occasionally by lightly-armed footmen. The large Shield was not the only one in use in the Homeric period. Neptune's advice to the Argives shews this :—

“ The best and broadest Bucklers of the host,
And brightest helmets put we on, and armed
With largest spears advance.—
Ye then who feel your hearts
Undaunted, but are armed with smaller Shields,
Them give to those who fear, and in exchange.
Their stronger Shields and broader, take yourselves.”

And again :—

“ With many a stroke
The bull-hide Shields and lighter targets rang.”

⁷ Gen. xv. 1.

Perhaps, however, there was not such a contrast of size between the smaller and larger Shields mentioned here, as between the *tzinnah* and *magen*. The latter is the Shield which the present text^a mentions, and is thought by Gesenius to be analogous to the Roman *clypeus*. In this opinion we concur, because both seem to have been Shields of average form and size. The Roman *clypeus* was a medium-sized Shield, round, oval, or hexangular in figure ; and had sometimes a boss in the centre, as had the Hebrew *magen*, to which bosses are assigned in Job xv. 26, "The thick bosses of his Bucklers." The central boss, which was a kind of projecting dagger, does not, however, seem to have been peculiar to any one kind of Shield. It rendered the Shield at the same time a defensive, as well as an offensive weapon, and was of great use in bearing down the enemy in close fight. The Shield of Agamemnon had twenty-one bosses, twenty surrounding bosses, and one in the centre. The Hebrews must have had a considerable variety of Shields ; for besides these two, which occur most frequently, there are others of which we know nothing distinctly ; but may infer that the different terms describe peculiarities of form and size. One of these is the *sohairah*, which, from the etymology, would seem to have been of a round form, which was and is a very common shape for the smaller kind of Shields, and sometimes for the larger, It may well be taken as the type of the Roman Shield called *parma*, a small round Shield much used by the cavalry and light-armed foot, and now very common in the east.

^a Judges v. 8.

Another is the *shelet*, which occurs only in the plural, and, as it appears, from a comparison of parallel passages, to be sometimes used as synonymous with *magen*, we may infer that the former was essentially the same as the latter, with some small variation of make, or ornament. See, for instance, Sol. Song, iv. 4. "Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand Bucklers, (*magen*,) all Shields (*shiltai*, sing. *shelet*,) of mighty men."

The materials of which Shields were made, were sometimes of wood, as they still are in barbarous nations. Xenophon describes the Bucklers of the Egyptians, who served in the army of Artaxerxes at the battle of Cunaxa, as long wooden Shields which reached down to the feet. Plutarch, in his "Life of Camillus," says, that the Romans used wooden Shields till the time of that general, who caused them to be covered with plates of iron. This agrees with the description of Polybius, who says, that the larger Roman Shields were, in his time, composed of two planks glued together, and covered first with linen and then with hide. The extreme edges, both above and below, were guarded with plates of iron; as well to secure the Shield against the strokes of swords, as that it might, without injury, be rested on the ground. To the surface was likewise fitted a shell of iron, to turn aside the more violent strokes of stones, spears, or other ponderous weapons. But the ancient Shields with which we are historically best acquainted, were made wholly of bull's hide, doubled or tripled, or even more thickly folded. A previous extract from the Iliad, shows Hector's Shield to have been of this material;

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and this seems to have been the case with the Shields of most of the Homeric heroes, whether Greeks or Trojans. These Shields were often anointed and rubbed, to keep them in good condition, and prevent cracking, or injury from wet, as were also those of metal, to preserve them from rust. To which there are allusions in Scripture, as in 2 Sam. i. 21, 22; and in Isa. xxi. 5. "Arise, ye princes, and anoint the Shield." These Shields of skin had often a metallic border, to preserve the margin from injury. The hides were often plated, and otherwise strengthened, and ornamented with metal; most commonly brass, but often silver and gold. Such were many of the Shields of Homer's heroes. That most fully described is the Shield of Ajax, and the description is most instructive. It is given in the account of the fight between that hero and Hector:—

" Ajax approached him, bearing, like a tower,
His seven-fold brazen Shield, by Tychius wrought
With art elaborate; like him was none
In Shield-work, and whose home in Hyla stood;
He framed the various shield with seven hides
Of fatted beeves, all plated o'er with brass."

Hector hurls his spear at Ajax:—

" It struck the Shield of Ajax; through the brass,
Its eighth integument, through six of hide
It flew, and spent its fury on the seventh."

Afterwards, Hector—

" Retiring, heaved
A black, rough, huge stone fragment from the plain,
Which, hurling at the seven-fold Shield, he smote
Its central boss: loud rang the brazen rim."

We beg to direct attention to the circumstance, that this Shield is called a brazen Shield, though seven of its eight integuments were of skin. We may, therefore, infer with probability, that the brazen Shield of Goliath was merely covered with brass, for if it had been of solid metal, and had been, like his other weapons, proportioned to his gigantic bulk, it is not easy to understand how his armour-bearer could have supported its weight. This conjecture might also apply to the golden Shields which were made by Solomon; and for which, after they had been taken away by Shishak, king of Egypt, Rehoboam substituted Shields of brass. However, we will not insist on this, because such Shields, hung up for display in armouries and sacred places, were often, among the heathen, of solid metal. Men prided themselves on keeping these plated Shields bright and polished; whence Homer so frequently applies to them epithets expressing their brightness and splendour. They were kept in a case, seemingly of leather, when not in use: and hence to "uncover the Shield" is an expression denoting preparation for battle.^a

But although Shields for action were generally plated with metal, those entirely of metal were also known. Hadadezer had golden Shields, which became the prey of David.^b Alexander the Great had a body of *Argyraspides*, or soldiers with silver Shields; and Alexander Severus established a troop of *Chrysaspides*, or soldiers with golden Shields. Judging from the account of the famous Shield of Achilles, we should

^a Isa. xxii. 6.

^b 2 Sam. viii. 7.

suppose that the Shields then used were not of a solid mass, but that their thickness was composed of several plates of the same, or different metal. Of this Shield we learn incidentally, in the account of the owner's combat with Æneas, that—

“ With five folds
Vulcan had fortified it ; two were brass ;
The two interior tin ; the midmost gold.”

The mention of this Shield leads us to notice the elaborate and costly ornamental work with which the higher class of Shields were ornamented, and which, very probably, belonged to the golden Shields of Solomon. There was, in fact, no part of their armour which the ancients prized so highly, and took so much delight in ornamenting. They adorned its broad disk with all sorts of figures ; with birds, beasts, and the inanimate works of nature ; with representations of their own or other's exploits ; with historic scenes ; with the picturesque circumstances of life, and with the effigies of gods and heroes. Like the gorgeous works in metal, described by Spenser, they were

“ Wrought with wild antickes which their follies played,
In the rich metal as they living were.”

Of all the Shields of this sort, the most astonishing for its workmanship and splendour, is, that which Homer describes as having been made for Achilles by Vulcan, and to which we have adverted above. The description itself is, perhaps, the finest piece of descriptive poetry extant in ancient or modern literature. The Shield is described by the poet as the work of Vulcan. But this alleged origin ought not to prevent us from

receiving it as a satisfactory illustration. However much it may have been embellished by Homer's imagination, models doubtless existed on which the description was founded : and what is more, these models probably originated in Western Asia. The Greeks themselves, could not, at this time, have executed works of this description ; and Homer himself gives an Asiatic origin to all the fine works in metal of which he speaks, whenever he mentions the place from which they came. He most frequently mentions Sidon ; and it is a remarkable fact in connexion with this, that Solomon obtained the services of a Tyrian to execute the rich metallic ornaments of the temple ; and there is every probability that this person made the golden Shields to which we have so often referred. We can thus, in Homer's own time, and with his consent, bring the manufacture of the admirable works he describes to the very doors of the Hebrews, who were themselves no mean workers in metal, as we see by the various rich and costly utensils which they executed for the tabernacle.

Next to the Shield of Achilles, the most striking of any described by Homer is that of Agamemnon. No Divine origin is assigned to this ; and as the description is short, and distinctly portrays the Shield itself, as well as its ornaments, we here give it.

“ His massy shield, o’ershadowing him whole,
High wrought and beautiful, he next assumed.
Ten brazen circles bright around its field
Extensive, circle within circle, ran ;
The central boss was black ; but hemmed about
With twice ten bosses of resplendent tin.

There, dreadful ornament ! the visage dark
 Of Gorgon scowled, bordered by flight and fear.
 The loop was silver, and a serpent form
 Cerulean over all its surface twined.
 Three heads erecting on one neck, the heads
 Together wreathed into a stately crown."

KITTO.

In Scripture God is often called the Shield of his people : "I am thy Shield," says God to Abraham,^c "I will protect and defend thee." The psalmist says, "Thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous ; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a Shield."^d "With thy love and gracious providence thou wilt keep him safe on every side." Princes and great men are also called the Shield of the people, because by their office they are, or should be, the common parents and protectors of their people, to defend them from all oppressions and injuries. "The Shields of the earth belong unto God,"^e are dependent upon him. Faith, in Scripture, is likewise called a Shield,^f because it derives strength from Christ for overcoming the temptations of Satan. They hung up their Shields upon towers for ornaments, or as trophies of victory, to make use of upon occasions. The tower of David was adorned with a thousand Shields. "Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand Bucklers, all Shields of mighty men."^g By neck, commentators understand the grace of faith, which, as is said, is called a Shield ; and this shows that by Faith the church is strong and victorious over all her enemies. —CRUDEN.

^c Gen. xv. 1.^d Ps. v. 12.^e Ps. xlvii. 9.^f Ephes. vi. 16.^g Cant. iv. 4.

Scripture Illustration.

THE word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, "Fear not Abram: I am thy Shield, and thy exceeding great reward."^b And he (Goliath) had a target of brass between his shoulders;—and one bearing a Shield went before him.¹ And king Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold; six hundred shekels of gold went to one target. And he made three hundred Shields of beaten gold; three pounds of gold went to one Shield: and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.^k The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, of valiant men, men able to bear Buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow, and skilful in war.—And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David into the hold to the wilderness, men of might, and men of war fit for the battle, that could handle Shield and Buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains.¹ Moreover Jehoiada the priest delivered to the captains of hundreds, spears, and Bucklers, and Shields, that had been king David's, which were in the House of God.^m Above all, taking the Shield of Faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.ⁿ

Happy art thou, O Israel:
Who is like unto thee, O people, saved

^b Gen. xv. 1.

¹ 1 Sam. xvii. 6, 7.

^k 1 Kings x. 16, 17.

¹ 1 Chron. v. 18; xii. 8.

^m 2 Chron. xxiii. 9.

ⁿ Ephes. vi. 16.

By the Lord ! the Shield of thy help,
And who is the sword of thy excellency !^o

Then was war in the gates :
Was there a Shield or spear seen
Among forty thousand in Israel ?^p

Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew,
Neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings :

For there the Shield of the mighty is vilely cast away,
The Shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed
with oil.^q

For he (the wicked man) stretcheth out his hand
against God,
And strengtheneth himself against the Almighty
He runneth upon him, even on his neck,
Upon the thick bosses of his Bucklers.^r

But thou, O Lord, art a Shield for me ;
My glory, and the lifter up of mine head.^s

As for God, his way is perfect :
The word of the Lord is tried ;
He is a Buckler to all those that trust in him.—
Thou hast also given me the Shield of thy salvation :
And thy right hand hath holden me up,
And thy gentleness hath made me great.^t

The Lord is my strength and my Shield
My heart trusted in him, and I am helped.

Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with
me :

Fight against them that fight against me.

^o Deut. xxxiii. 29.

^p Judges v. 8.

^q Sam.

^r Job xvi. 25, 26.

^s Ps. iii. 8

^t Ps. xviii. 30, 35.

^u Ps. xxviii. 7.

Take hold of Shield and Buckler,
And stand up for my help.^v

Behold, O God our Shield,
And look upon the face of thine Anointed.
For the Lord God is a Sun and a Shield :
The Lord will give grace and glory :
No good thing will he withhold
From them that walk uprightly.^w

He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his
wings shalt thou trust :

His truth shall be thy Shield and Buckler.^x

O Israel, trust thou in the Lord :
He is their help and their Shield.^y

Thou art my hiding-place, and my Shield :
I hope in thy word.^z

He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous :
He is a Buckler to them that walk uprightly.^a

Every word of God is pure :
He is a Shield unto them that put their trust in him.^b
Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an
armoury,

Whereon there hang a thousand Bucklers,
All Shields of mighty men.^c

Prepare the table, watch in the watch-tower, eat, drink :
Arise, ye princes, and anoint the Shield.^d

Order ye the Buckler and Shield,
And draw near to battle.^e

The men of Arvad with thine army were upon thy
walls round about,

^v Ps. xxxv. 1, 2.

^w Ps. lxxxiv. 9, 11.

^x Ps. xci. 4.

^y Ps. cxv. 9.

^z Ps. cxix. 114.

^a Prov. ii. 7.

^b Prov. xxx. 5.

^c Sol. Song, iv. 4.

^d Isa. xxi. 5.

^e Jer. xlv. 3.

And the Gammadims were in thy towers :
 They hanged their Shields upon thy walls round about ;
 They have made thy beauty perfect.^f

Behold, I am against thee, O Gog,
 The chief prince of Meshech and Tubal :
 And I will turn thee back,
 And put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee
 forth,

And all thine army, horses and horsemen,
 All of them clothed with all sorts of armour,
 Even a great company with Bucklers and Shields,
 All of them handling swords :
 Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them ;
 All of them with Shield and Helmet.^g

SATAN'S STRONGHOLDS CAST DOWN.^h

SHOUT, for the battlements are fallen,
 Which Heaven itself defied !
 The aspiring towers, dismantled all,
 Now spread their ruins wide !

Thy wondrous trumpets, Prince of Peace,
 Sent forth their mighty sound ;
 The strength of Jericho was struck,
 And totter'd to the ground.

No more proud reas'nings shall dispute
 What truth Divine declares ;
 No more self-righteousness to plead
 Its own perfection dares.

^f zek. xxvii. 11.

^g Ezek. xxxviii. 3—5.

^h 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

No strength our ruined powers can boast,
Thy precepts to fulfil ;
No liberty we ask or wish
For our rebellious will.

The gates we open to admit
The Saviour's gentle sway ;
Blest Jesus ! 'tis thy right to reign—
Our pleasure to obey.

Each thought, in sweet subjection held,
Thy sovereign power shall own ;
And every traitor shall be slain,
That dares dispute the throne.

DODDRIDGE.

Doctrinal Instruction.

THE Shield is not for the defence of any particular part of the body, as almost all the other pieces are : Helmet fitted for the head ; Plate designed for the breast ; and so others, they have their several parts, which they are fastened to : but the Shield is a piece that is intended for the defence of the whole body. It was used, therefore, to be made very large ; for its broadness, called a gate or door, because so long and large, as in a manner to cover the whole body ; to which that place alludes. " Thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous ; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a Shield."¹ And if the Shield were not large enough at once to cover every part, yet being a movable piece

¹ Ps. v. 12.

of armour, the skilful soldier might turn it this way or that way, to catch the blow or arrow from lighting on any part they were directed to. And this, indeed, doth excellently well set forth the universal use that Faith is of to the Christian. It defends the whole man ; every part of the Christian by it is preserved. Sometimes the temptation is levelled at his head : Satan, he will be disputing against this truth and that, to make the Christian, if he can, call them into question, merely because his reason and understanding cannot comprehend them ; and he prevails with some that do not think themselves the unwise in the world, upon this very account, to blot the Deity of Christ, with other mysterious truths of the gospel, quite out of the creed. Now Faith interposeth between the Christian and this arrow. It comes in to the relief of the Christian's weak understanding as seasonably as Zeruiah did to David, when the giant Ishbi-benob thought to have slain him. I will trust the word of God, saith the believer, rather than my own purblind reason. Abraham not being weak in Faith, "considered not his own body now dead."^k If sense should have had the hearing of that business : yea, if that holy man had put it to a reference between sense and reason also, what resolutions his thoughts should come to concerning this strange message that was brought him, he would have been in danger of calling the truth of it in question, though God himself was the messenger ; but Faith brought him honourably off. Again, is it the conscience that the tempter assaults ? (and it is not seldom that

^k Rom. iv. 19.

he is shooting his fiery darts of horror and terror at this mark) Faith receives the shock, and saves the creature harmless. "I had fainted, unless I had believed," said David.¹ He means when false witnesses rose up against him, and such as breathed out cruelty, Faith was his best fence against man's charge ; and so it is against Satan's, and conscience's also. Never was man in a sadder condition than the poor jailer ;^m much ado he had to keep his own hands from offering violence to himself ; who that had seen him fall trembling at Paul and Silas's feet, with that sad question in his mouth, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved ?" could have thought that this deep wound that was now given his conscience would have been so soon closed and cured ? The earthquake of horror that did so dreadfully shake his conscience is gone, and his trembling turned into rejoicing : now, mark what made this blessed calm : "Believe (saith Paul) on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." And it is said, "He rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house."

The Shield doth not only defend the whole body, but is a defence to the soldier's armour also ; it keeps the arrow from the helmet as well as head, from the breast and breastplate also. Thus Faith, it is armour upon armour, a grace that preserves all other graces. What doth this, above all, import ? There is variety among interpreters about it. Jerome reads it, "in all things taking the Shield of Faith ;" that is, in all duties, enterprises, temptations, or afflictions, whatever you are called to do or suffer, take Faith ; indeed, Faith to

¹ Ps. xxvii. 13.^m Acts xvi. 27—30.

the Christian, is like fire to the chemist : nothing can be done without it Christianly : "Without Faith it is impossible to please God." And how can the Christian please himself in that wherein he doth not please his God ? Others read it, "over all take the Shield of faith ;" that is, take it over all your graces, as that which will cover them. All other graces have their safety from Faith ; they lie secure under the shadow of Faith, as an army lies safe under the protection and command of a strong castle planted round with cannon. But we shall follow our translation as being most comprehensive, and that which will take these within its compass. "Above all, take," etc. ; that is, among all the pieces of armour which you are to provide, and wear for your defence, let this have the pre-eminence of your care to get, and having got, to keep it. Now, that the apostle meant to give a pre-eminence to Faith above all other graces, appears, first, by the piece of armour he compares it to, "the Shield," which of old was prized above all other pieces by soldiers. They counted greater shame to lose their Shield, than to lose the field ; and therefore, when under the very foot of their enemy, they would not part with it, but esteemed it an honour to die with their Shield in their hand. It was the charge that one laid upon her son, going into the wars, when she gave him a Shield, that he should either bring his Shield home with him, or be brought home upon his Shield ; she had rather see him dead with it, than come home without it. Secondly : by the noble effect which is here ascribed to Faith ; "Where-with ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." The other pieces are nakedly commended. Take

the girdle of truth, breastplate of righteousness, and so the rest, but nothing singly ascribed to any of them, what they can do : but when he speaks of Faith, he ascribes the whole victory to it : this quencheth "all the fiery darts of the wicked." And why thus ? are the other graces of no use, and doth Faith do all ? What need then the Christian load himself with more than this one piece ? I answer, every piece hath its necessary use in the Christian's warfare ; not any part of the whole suit can be spared in the day of battle ; but the reason, I humbly conceive, why no particular effect is annexed severally to each of these, but all ascribed to Faith, is to let us know that all these graces, their efficacy, and our benefit from them, is in their conjunction with Faith, and influence they receive from Faith ; so that this is plainly the design of the Spirit of God to give Faith the precedency in our care above the rest ; only take heed that you do not fancy any indifference or negligence to be allowed you in your endeavours after the other graces, because you are more strongly provoked and excited up to the getting and keeping this. The apostle would intend your care here, but not remit it there. Cannot we bid a soldier, above all parts of his body, to beware of a wound at his heart, but he must needs think presently he need take no care to guard his head ? Truly such a one would deserve a cracked crown to cure him of his folly. Faith defends the Christian in the exercise of his graces. "Thou standest by Faith."ⁿ As a soldier, all under the protection of a Shield, stands his ground,

ⁿ Rom. xi. 20.

and does his duty, notwithstanding all the shots that are made against him, to drive him back ; when faith fails, then every grace is put to the run and rout.—GURNALL.

Over all their other armour, Faith must be placed as a Shield : by crediting the testimony of God, realizing unseen objects, resting the soul on the promises, and relying on the power, truth, mercy, wisdom, grace, and providence of God, according to his word, they would be able to ward off the temptations of Satan ; as soldiers received the spears or javelins of the enemy on their Shields. The suggestions of the Tempter would indeed often resemble darts, by the suddenness and violence with which they were injected ; and fiery darts, by the fatal effects produced by them. For, as poisoned darts would fatally inflame the blood of those wounded by them ; and as firebrands thrown into a besieged city would, at length, effect a destructive conflagration, unless immediately extinguished ; so the suggestions of Satan would inflame the anger, pride, sensual passions, avarice, or other corrupt propensities of the heart, unless immediately intercepted and quenched by the Shield of Faith, resting on the promises, and the truth, power, and mercy of God to perform them. This clause is often interpreted exclusively of those harassing temptations, by which hard thoughts of God, and horrid or desponding conclusions concerning themselves, are excited in men's minds. These lead to immense distress, and eventually to guilt ; and faith in the promises of God must extinguish them : yet the apostle evidently meant the words in a more comprehensive sense.—SCOTT.

Notwithstanding the armour of the ancients was generally so constructed that it could repel any weapon that might come against it, the warrior did not conceive himself to be completely armed without a Shield. In reference to the Christian soldier, this observation may be applied with still greater propriety ; because, however excellent the different pieces of his armour may be, not one of them will suffice for his protection, unless it be itself also covered by the Shield of Faith. As "without Faith it is impossible to please God ;" so without Faith it is impossible to withstand Satan. That powerful adversary will soon pierce through our truth and righteousness, if they be exposed to his assault without any additional defence. On this account the apostle directs, that "above all," and in addition to all, we should take "the Shield of Faith."

The particular use of a Shield is to ward off a blow from any part of the body that may be menaced ; and to that end it is to be applied in every direction as occasion may require. Now Satan strikes sometimes at one part, and sometimes at another, according as the different parts may seem most open to his attack. And the temptations with which he makes his assaults are as fiery darts, which fly with incredible velocity, and are calculated to inflame the soul with their deadly poison. Satan has many fierce and fiery temptations whereby he endeavours to wound the head. There is not anything so horrid or blasphemous which he will not suggest to the mind. Even Atheism itself is not so shocking, but he is capable of impressing the idea of it upon the soul, and of leading men to an adoption of

it in practice, at least, if not also in theory and judgment. He will take occasion also from the difficulties there are in Scripture to draw men to infidelity. "How can that be the word of God which is so full of contradictions? And who can know with any certainty what it declares to us, when those who profess to believe it are of such opposite sentiments?" By such temptations as these, he assaults chiefly the avowed enemies of God. But there are other temptations whereby he labours, and with too much success, to turn from the faith those who confess the Divine authority of the Scriptures. He will draw them into errors of various kinds, and thus undermine the principles which he could not destroy by open assault.

Truth, provided it be a true and living Faith, receives the word of God simply on the authority of Him that revealed it. It staggers not at any difficulties, either in the dispensations of his providence, or the declarations of his grace. Conscious of man's inability to comprehend even the most common matters in their full extent, the believer submits his reason to God, and receives without gainsaying whatsoever Divine wisdom has revealed. But Faith is as useful to protect the heart as to defend the head. As it obviates every difficulty that may perplex the understanding, so it wards off everything that may intimidate or defile the soul. We may observe in commendation of Faith, considered as the Christian's Shield, that its use is universal; its application is easy; and its success is sure.

All other parts of armour have their distinct province, to which they are confined. Truth and righteousness

defend the heart, but they are of no use at all to protect the head. But Faith is universally applicable to every species of temptation. Faith discerns the truth of the gospel, and thereby is fitted to preserve the heart from sin. It is no less useful to the feet ; for we stand by Faith, and we walk by Faith. Every step we take is safest under the guidance of Faith, because it both affords us the best light, and enables us to walk without stumbling even in the dark. Its application is easy. A Shield is easily transferred from one position to another as occasion may require ; and Faith also quickly moves to the protection of any part that may be attacked. We do not say that it is an easy thing to produce Faith ; for it requires no less power than that which was exerted in raising Christ from the dead, to create Faith in the heart. But when a person has Faith, then we say it is easy for him to apply it for his defence. Its success is sure. But for their Faith, the most eminent of God's saints would have been destroyed. "I had fainted," says David, "unless I had believed ;"^o and Peter would have been driven away as the chaff, if our Lord had not secured his Faith from falling. On the other hand we have a host of saints upon record, "who through Faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again : and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance ; that they might obtain a better resurrection : and others

• Ps. xxvii. 13.

had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment : they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword : they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.^p These all obtained a good report through Faith." Further, if we search the annals of the world, we shall not find one single instance wherein believers were ultimately vanquished. On many occasions they have been wounded, and sorely too : even the father of the faithful himself was not so expert in the use of his Shield, as to ward off every blow : but believers are secured from any fatal stroke. Our Lord himself has pledged his word that they shall never perish ; that if they fall, they shall be raised up again to renew the contest, and that Satan shall finally be bruised under their feet.

Remarkable in this view are the expressions of the text. The idea of quenching, the fiery darts of the wicked one may perhaps refer to the custom of making Shields sometimes of raw hides, that, in case a poisoned arrow should perforate them, the wound, which on account of the poison must otherwise have been fatal, might be healed. But, perhaps, the true meaning may be, that by Faith we shall, as completely defeat the malignant efforts of Satan, as by the extinguishing of fire, we shall be delivered from its fury. Nor is this true of some temptations only ; it extends to all without exception. Nor can it be said of some believers only, who are of the highest class, for all who are armed with the Shield of Faith, whether they be old or young,

^p Heb. xi. 33—37.

rich or poor, learned or unlearned, “ shall be able” perfectly, and for ever, to subdue their adversary. “ Have Faith in God :”[¶] if ye have believed in the Father, believe also in Christ.” “ Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established ;”^r believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.—SIMEON.

FAITH.

Faith—like a simple, unsuspecting child,
Serenely resting on its mother’s arm—
Reposing every care upon her God,
Sleeps on his bosom, and expects no harm :

Receives with joy the promises he makes,
Nor questions of his purpose, or his power :
She does not doubting ask, “ Can this be so ?”
The Lord has said it, and there needs no more.

However deep be the mysterious word,
However dark, she disbelieves it not ;
Where reason would examine, Faith obeys,
And “ It is written,” answers every doubt.

In vain, with rude and overwhelming force,
Conscience repeats her tale of misery ;
And powers infernal, wakeful to destroy,
Urge the worn spirit to despair and die.

¶ Mark xi. 22.

r 2 Chron. xx. 20.

As evening's pale and solitary star
 But brightens while the darkness gathers round :
 So Faith, unmoved amid surrounding storms,
 Is fairest seen in darkness most profound.
CAROLINE FRY.

The Christian's Sword.

THE WORD OF GOD.



THE SWORD.



THE SWORD.

THE CHRISTIAN'S SWORD.

THE WORD OF GOD.

His Sword was in his hand,
Still warm with recent fight ;
Ready that moment at command,
Through rock and steel to smite.
It was a two-edged blade,
Of heavenly temper keen ;
And double were the wounds it made,
Where'er it smote between :
'Twas death to sin ;—'twas life
To all that mourned for sin ;
It kindled, and it silenced strife,
Made war and peace within.

MONTGOMERY

Historical Notice.

THE history of warlike weapons forms a curious and instructive chapter in the history of man. Swords of metal could by no means be the earliest, or one of the earliest, of those weapons which in process of time men devised for the purpose of defending themselves, or offending others. Such an instrument as a Sword cannot well be of anything but metal ; and therefore a

considerable advance in civilisation, indicated by the existence of the art of working metals, must have been made before the Sword was invented. Hence it is that Swords and sabres have never been known to any but civilized, or semi-civilized nations ; nothing of the kind being ever found among savages. Yet we see this weapon in the most remote ages known in Asia. It is in fact the most early weapon mentioned in Scripture. It was with the Sword that Simeon and Levi did such terrible execution at Shechem ; and the patriarch Jacob mentions the Sword and the bow, as the weapons with which he had defeated the Amorites.* There is no doubt that the Swords of the most ancient times were of brass, or rather copper. To speak of a copper Sword may seem strange ; but it is certain that copper was wrought long before iron, and applied to every domestic, operative, and warlike purpose for which metal was required. That this was the case in the time of Homer, we see from his poems, where we observe brass applied to almost every use. The Iliad, from its great antiquity, and from its frequent descriptions of arms and armour, is our most valuable guide in this class of subjects. We there find that there is no sort of weapon, which is not in some instances, if not always, made of brass ; and indeed where the material of a metallic weapon is mentioned at all, we usually find it to be brass. As to Swords, their material is not generally mentioned ; but the famous Sword of Achilles himself was of brass, whence we may conclude that they were generally of that metal. Swords were

* Gen. xlviii. 22.

also, at that early time, highly enriched, as we see by the description of Agamemnon's :—

“ He slung his Sword
Athwart his shoulders ; dazzling bright it shone
With gold embossed, and silver was the sheath
Suspended graceful in a belt of gold.”

The Swords of the Greeks and Romans continued, in times long subsequent, to be of copper. Specimens also of Swords of this metal, supposed to have belonged to the Phœnicians, and their descendants the Carthaginians, have been dug up in various countries. Specimens found in Ireland, Cornwall, and elsewhere, in countries known to these people, have been found to coincide with others dug up at Cannæ, where the Romans sustained their great overthrow, and which are supposed to have belonged to their conquerors. Such weapons are of peculiar interest in our inquiry, as they may thus, with great probability, be traced to the near neighbours of the Israelites in Canaan, whence we may be allowed to suppose that theirs, after their settlement in that country, were of similar form and material. The general resemblance of these Swords to those in most common use among the Romans, is accounted for, by the fact that they borrowed the shape of the blade from Spain, which country had immemorially been the seat of commercial colonies of the Phœnicians and Carthaginians, and a considerable part of which the latter people ultimately held in military possession. As copper is a soft metal, and easily blunted, it may be asked how it could be adapted to form cutting instruments ? Some means must certainly have been resorted to for the purpose of hardening it. Tempering seems

to have been the means most commonly used. The ancient writers themselves say this ; and the observations which have been made on Greek and Roman antiquities seem to confirm this account. The Irish weapons were assayed by Mr. Alchorn, who says, " the metal appears to me to be chiefly copper, interspersed with particles of iron, and perhaps, some zinc, but without containing either gold or silver : it seems probable, that the metal was cast in its present state, and afterwards reduced to its proper figure by filing. The iron might either be obtained with the copper from the ore, or added afterward in the fusion, to give the necessary rigidity of a weapon.

As a general remark upon ancient Swords, it may be observed, that the Swords of civilized nations were straight, and those of barbarians curved. The Swords used by cavalry were long ; but antiquity had no such thin-bladed narrow Swords as are in use in modern Europe ; a guard for the fingers is also usually wanting in the most ancient Swords. The Egyptian Swords seem to have been cutting Swords ; one sort is straight, with a curved point, and reminds one of a carving-knife ; another resembles a scymitar, or curved razor. There is also a sort of straight, tapering dagger, quite similar to one that is still used in Western Asia, but not so broad in the blade. These Swords and daggers are usually represented with cords and tassels at the hilt. Dr. Meyrick calls these sorts Egyptian-Greek ; and does not notice any others. Conceding this point to so high an authority, we are left at liberty to conclude that other Swords, not noticed by him, but which often occur in the Egyptian paintings, are pure

and ancient Egyptian. One of these has a remarkable resemblance to a sickle ; and the other looks like a broad-bladed and curved knife. It is interesting to note these forms, from the probability that the weapons of the Israelites in the wilderness were of a similar character. We learn from Scripture that the Israelites had daggers and Swords ; some of the latter had two edges, and were "girded upon the thigh." It does not appear that they wore them continually, but only as occasion required. The ancient Persians wore their Swords suspended from a belt on the right side. Herodotus speaks of "golden Swords," as among the spoils taken by the Greeks from the Persians ; by which he must probably be understood to mean that the Persians had the art of inlaying with gold the hilts and blades of their Swords, a practice in which that people still excel. Some of the Persian Swords have a resemblance to the Phœnician copper Swords, which we have mentioned ; and their straightness would, according to the above-quoted Roman rule, show the civilisation of that people. But the same rule would make the Egyptians, with their curved weapons, "barbarous ;" whereas, in truth, both the Persians and the Egyptians were people at least as civilized as those that applied that degrading epithet to them. The early Greeks wore the Sword under the left arm-pit, so that the pommel touched the nipple of their breast ; it hung by a belt, and its length was nearly equal to that of the arm. The scabbard, of the same breadth as the Sword, terminated in a knob like a mushroom. Dr. Meyrick describes different sorts of Greek Swords ; but we cannot enter into the account further than to state that

some sorts were straight for cutting and thrusting ; some, intended for cutting, were curved, and had the edge on the inner curve of the blade. The hilts were sometimes of ivory and gold, and occasionally guarded by a cross-bar. The Romans, when they relinquished brass and copper for the blade, retained it for the hilt. The Romans wore the Sword on the right thigh, probably that it might not obstruct the free motion of the buckler ; but in ancient monuments, the soldiers are sometimes seen to wear them on the left side. As the Jews were at different periods connected with all the people to whose Swords we have alluded, and probably used the same kind of weapons, these accounts form the most suitable elucidations we can furnish. The Arabian dagger is, most unquestionably, most ancient—perhaps patriarchal.—KITTO.

Scripture Illustration.

WHEN Joshua was by Jericho—he lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, there stood a man over against him with his Sword drawn in his hand : and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, “ Art thou for us, or for our adversaries ?” And he said, “ Nay : but as captain of the host of the Lord, am I now come.”^t And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal : and they cried, “ The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.”^u There was no Sword in the hand of David.

^t Josh. v. 13, 14.

^u Judg. vii. 20.

Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his Sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.^v And David said unto Ahimelech, "And is there not here under thine hand spear or Sword? For I have neither brought my Sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste." And the Priest said, "The Sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest in the valley of Elah, behold it is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod: if thou wilt take that, take it: for there is no other save that, here." And David said, "There is none like that; give it me."^w When they were at the great stone which is in Gibeon, Amasa went before them. And Joab's garment that he had put on was girded unto him, and upon it a girdle with a Sword fastened upon his loins in the sheath thereof; and as he went forth it fell out.^x Every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his Sword girded by his side, and so builded.^y Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a Sword.^z Take the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.^a For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a

^v 1 Sam. xvii. 50, 51.^x 2 Sam. xx. 8.^a Ephes. vi. 17.^w 1 Sam. xxi. 8, 9.^y Neh. iv. 17, 18.^z Matt. x. 34.

discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.^b
 One like unto the Son of Man—and out of his mouth
 went a sharp two-edged Sword.^c And his name is
 called “The Word of God.”—And out of his mouth
 goeth a sharp Sword, that with it he should smite the
 nations.^d

If I whet my glittering Sword,
 And mine hand take hold on judgment ;
 I will render vengeance to mine enemies,
 And will reward them that hate me.
 I will make mine arrows drunk with blood,
 And my Sword shall devour flesh.^e

From the blood of the slain,
 From the fat of the mighty,
 The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
 And the Sword of Saul returned not empty.^f

It is drawn, and cometh out of the body ;
 Yea, the glittering Sword cometh out of his gall :
 Terrors are upon him.^g

God is angry with the wicked every day ;
 If he turn not, he will whet his Sword.^h

Gird thy Sword upon thy thigh, O Most Mighty,
 With thy glory and thy majesty.ⁱ

Let the high praises of God be in their mouth,
 And a two-edged Sword in their hand.^k

For my Sword shall be bathed in heaven :
 Behold, it shall come down upon Idumea,
 And upon the people of my curse, to judgment.

^b Heb. iv. 12.

^c Rev. i. 13, 16.

^d Rev. xix. 13, 15.

^e Deut. xxxii. 41, 42.

^f 2 Sam. i. 22.

^g Job, xx. 25.

^h Ps. vii. 11, 12.

ⁱ Ps. xlv. 3.

^k Ps. cxlix. 6.

The Sword of the Lord is filled with blood.¹

O thou Sword of the Lord,
How long will it be ere thou be quiet ? put up thyself
into thy scabbard,

Rest, and be still.—

How can it be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given it a
charge

Against Ashkelon, and against the sea shore ?

There hath he appointed it.^m

A Sword, a Sword is sharpened, and also furbished :
It is sharpened to make a sore slaughter ;
It is furbished that it may glitter :
Should we then make mirth ?—
And he hath given it to be furbished, that it may be
handled :

This Sword is sharpened, and it is furbished,
To give it into the hand of the slayer.

Cry and howl, son of man ;—
For it shall be upon my people,
It shall be upon all the princes of Israel :
Terrors by reason of the Sword shall be upon my people ;
Smite therefore upon thy thigh.

Because it is a trial,
And what if the Sword condemn even the rod ?
It shall be no more, saith the Lord God.
Thou therefore, son of man, prophesy,
And smite thine hands together,
And let the Sword be doubled the third time, the Sword
of the slain :

It is the Sword of the great men that are slain,
Which entereth into their privy chambers.

¹ Isa. xxxiv. 5, 6.

^m Jer. xlvii. 6, 7.

I have set the point of the Sword against all their gates,
That their heart may faint, and their ruins be multiplied :
Ah ! it is made bright,

It is wrapped up for the slaughter.^a

They shall beat their Swords into ploughshares,
And their spears into pruning-hooks :

Nation shall not lift up a Sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more.^o

Awake, O Sword, against my Shepherd,
And against the Man that is my Fellow, saith the Lord
of Hosts :

Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered :
And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.^p

THE TRIUMPH OF CHRIST.^q

Loud to the Prince of heaven
Your cheerful voices raise ;
To him your vows be given,
And fill his courts with praise.
With conscious worth, all clad in arms,
All bright in charms, he sallies forth.

Gird on thy conquering Sword,
Ascend thy shining car,
And march, Almighty Lord,
To wage thy holy war.
Before his wheels, in glad surprise,
Ye valleys rise, and sink, ye hills.

^a Ezek. xxi. 9—15.

^o Micah iv. 3.

^p Zech. xiii. 7.

^q Ps. xlv. 8, 4.

Fair truth, and smiling love,
And injured righteousness,
In thy retinue move,
And seek from thee redress.
Thou in their cause shalt prosp'rous ride,
And far and wide dispense thy laws.
Before thine awful face
Millions of foes shall fall,
The captives of thy grace—
That grace which conquers all.
The world shall know, great King of kings,
What wondrous things thine arm can do.
Here to my willing soul
Bend thy triumphant way ;
Here every foe control,
And all thy power display.
My heart thy throne, blest Jesus, see
Bows low to thee, to thee alone.—DODDRIDGE.

Doctrinal Instruction.

The Sword was ever esteemed a most necessary part of the soldier's furniture, and, therefore, hath obtained a more general use in all ages, and among all nations, than any other weapon. Most nations have some particular weapons proper to themselves ; but few or none come into the field without a Sword. A pilot without his chart, a scholar without his book, and a soldier without his Sword, are alike ridiculous. But, above all these, how absurd it is for one to think of being a Christian, without knowledge of the Word of God, and

some skill to use this weapon! The usual name in Scripture for war, is the Sword; "I will call for a Sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth;"^r that is, I will send war. And this, because the Sword is the weapon of most universal use in war, and also that whereby the greatest execution is done in battle. Now, such a weapon is the Word of God in the Christian's hand. By the edge of this, his enemies fall, and his great exploits are done. "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the Word of their testimony."^s

There are two things we may take notice of. First, from the sort of arms here appointed for the Christian's use. A weapon that is both defensive and offensive, such is the Sword. All the rest in the apostle's armoury are set out by defensive arms, girdle, breast-plate, shield, and helmet. Such as are of use to defend and save the soldier from his enemy's stroke. But the Sword doth both defend him, and serves to wound his enemy also. Of like use is the Word of God to the Christian. First, it is for defence. Easily might the soldier be disarmed of all his other furniture, how glittering and glorious soever, had he not a Sword in his hand to lift up against his enemy's assaults. And with as little ado would the Christian be stripped of all his graces, had he not this Sword to defend them and himself too from Satan's fury. "Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction."^t This is like the flaming Sword with which God kept Adam out of Paradise. The saint is often compared to Christ's

^r Jer. xxv. 29.^s Rev. xii. 11,^t Ps. cxix. 92.

garden. There would not long hang any of their sweet fruit upon their souls, were not Satan kept off with the point of this Sword. Oh, this Word of God is a terror to him ; he cannot for his life overcome the dread of it. Let Christ say but, "It is written," and the foul fiend runs away with more confusion and terror, than Caligula at a crack of thunder. And that which was of such force coming from Christ's blessed lips to drive him away, the saints have always found the most successful instrument to defend against the fiercest temptations. Ask David what was the weapon with which he warded off the blows his enemy made at him, and he will tell you, it was the Word of God : "Concerning the works of men, by the Word of thy lips, I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer :"^u that is, by the help of thy Word, I have been able to preserve myself from those wicked works, and outrageous practices to which others, for want of this weapon to defend them, have been hurried. Again, the Sword, as it defends the soldier, so it offends his enemy. Thus the Word of God is, as a keeping, so a killing Sword. It doth not only keep and restrain him from yielding to the force of temptations without, but also by it he kills and mortifies his lusts within, and this makes the victory complete.

I begin with the weapon itself, "The Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." I shall first hold forth the Sword naked, and then put it again into the sheath, to handle it under the metaphor of a Sword. There is a twofold Word of God. First, a substantial, or subsisting Word, and that is the Son of God ; "The Word was with God, and the Word was God."^v "And

^u Ps. xvii. 4.

^v John i. 1.

he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called The Word of God.”^w This is spoken of a person, and he no other than Christ, the Son of God. But he is not the Word of God in the text. The Spirit is rather Christ's Sword, than Christ the Sword of the Spirit. “Out of his mouth goeth a sharp Sword, that with it he should smite the nations.” Secondly, there is a declaratory Word of God, and this is manifold, according to the divers ways and manners whereby the Lord hath been pleased to declare his mind to the sons of men. At first, while the earth was thinly sowed with people, and the age of man so voluminous as to contain many centuries of years, God delivered his mind by dreams and visions, with such like immediate revelations, unto faithful witnesses, who might instruct others of their generation therein, and transmit the knowledge of the same to after ages: they living so long, that three holy men were able, from the death of Adam, to preserve the purity of religion by certain traditions, till within a few years of the Israelites going down to Egypt.

The Sword being both of general and constant use among soldiers, and also that weapon with which they not only defend themselves, but do the greatest execution upon their enemies, most fitly sets forth the necessity and excellent use of the Word of God, by which the Christian both defends himself, and offends, yea, cuts down before him, all his enemies.

Why is this Sword attributed to the Spirit? Some take the abstract here to be put for the concrete, the Sword of the Spirit, for the spiritual Sword; as if it

^w Rev. xix. 13.

were no more but, "Take the spiritual Sword, which is the Word of God;" according to that of the apostle, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God;"^x that is spiritual. Indeed, Satan, being a spirit, must be fought with spiritual arms; and such is the Word, a spiritual Sword. And in these three respects the written Word is the Sword of the Spirit. First, he is the author of it: a weapon it is which his hand alone formed and fashioned; it came not out of any creature's forge: "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."^y Secondly, the Spirit is the only true interpreter of the Word. The Scriptures must be read, and can be understood by that Spirit alone, by whom they were made. He that made the lock, can only help us to a key that will fit its wards, and open its sense. "No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation;"^z and why not? It follows, because it came not from any private spirit at first; "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man," etc. And who knows the mind of the Spirit so well as himself? Thirdly, it is only the Spirit of God can give the Word its efficacy and power in the soul. Except he lays his weight on the truths we read and hear, to apply them close, and, as it were, cut their very image in our minds and hearts, they leave no more impression than a seal set upon a rock or stone would do; still the mind fluctuates, and the heart is unsatisfied, notwithstanding our own and other's utmost endeavours to the contrary.—GURNALL.

^x 2 Cor. x. 4.^y 2 Pet. i. 21.^z 2 Pet. i. 20.

To complete the whole, the Word of God must serve the Christian soldier for a Sword : an exact and comprehensive acquaintance with its various doctrines, promises, precepts, warnings, and a readiness at recollecting and adducing pertinent texts upon every emergency, would drive the tempter to a distance, and procure a final victory over him. Thus the whole suit of armour would be complete : for no covering was provided for the back ; as victory must be sought by valour, not by cowardice. To give all the rest their full efficacy ; to procure, put on, and keep bright, this " whole armour of God ;" the soldiers of Christ must " pray always ;" constantly, frequently, at stated times, in occasional ejaculations, and more abundantly in the prospect, or in the hour of temptation ; using all kinds " of prayer and supplication," in dependence on the Holy Spirit, and according to his teaching and influences ; and " watching unto this very thing," guarding against all remissness, discouragement, weariness, interruptions, and unseasonable engagements ; " with all perseverance ;" seeing Satan would peculiarly tempt them to negligence on this important concern, that he might obtain further advantages against them.

The Word of God is even " sharper than any two-edged sword," which would cut each way : for it can pierce the heart and conscience, like the irresistible lightning ; forcing convictions and alarms upon the most haughty and obstinate ; showing men their past and present sins, in all their odiousness, numberless multitude, and manifold aggravations ; detecting the unsuspected pride, enmity, rebellion, ingratitude, and other evils of the heart ; distinguishing men's characters

with the clearest evidence, and exposing the base motives of their most specious actions. Thus, by exhibiting the glory of the Divine perfections, men's relations and obligations to the great Creator; the spirituality, extent, excellency, and sanction of the law; the evil and desert of sin, and the depravity of the human heart, in a variety of ways, and a multiplicity of experiments; it forces conviction of guilt and danger upon the sinner, and compels him, as it were, to condemn himself, and seek deliverance: nor can any kind of delusion or hypocrisy stand before its penetrating energy, when experimentally and fully preached, and applied to the hearts of men according to their various characters. It is, as it were, a Sword, which can pierce so deep, and cut so keenly, as to divide between "soul and spirit;" and to penetrate the joints and marrow, which no other Sword can reach: being, in plain language, a "discerner" of men's most secret thoughts and intentions; so that it often shows them their most hidden purposes, and makes them afraid of being openly named and exposed; as if the preacher knew their hearts, far better than they did themselves, and had a register before him even of those sins which they have forgotten.—SCOTT.

The Christian's warfare is principally of the defensive kind; yet not so entirely, but that he must follow up the advantages which he has at any time gained, and seek the utter destruction of those enemies which infest his soul. After sustaining their assaults, he must himself become the assailant; having resisted the world and sin, he must proceed to overcome, condemn, and crucify them; and having withstood Satan, he must go

on to bruise him under his feet. That he may be enabled to carry this into effect, God has provided for him an offensive weapon, which, if skilfully used, shall accomplish the ruin of all his enemies,

What the Sword is to a warrior, that the Scriptures are to a child of God : they enable him to inflict a deadly wound on his adversaries, and to subdue them before him. Now the appellation here given to the Scriptures is deserving of particular attention. They are called "the Word of God," and "the Sword of the Spirit." They are called with great propriety the Word of God ; first, because they were inspired by Him. They were indeed written by men ; but men were only the agents and instruments that God made use of : they wrote only what God, by his Spirit, dictated to them : so that, in reality, the whole Scripture was as much written by the finger of God, as the laws were which he inscribed on two tables of stone, and delivered to his servant Moses. To this the Scriptures themselves bear witness ; for in them it is said, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God;" and again, "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

But they are called the Word of God, not merely as being inspired by him, but also as being a revelation of his mind and will to man. In them his eternal counsels are opened to the world. In them he has declared in what way he will be reconciled to his offending creatures. In them he has displayed all the riches of his grace, and exhibited all his perfections as united and glorified in the person of Christ. In short, whatever could lead to the establishment of truth, or the refutation of error, to the correction of sin, or the promotion of

righteousness, all is contained in that inspired volume, in which there is nothing superfluous, nothing defective; which therefore may be wholly and exclusively called "the Word of God."

But there is yet another and a very important ground of this appellation, namely, that the Scriptures are the voice of God to every individual of mankind. It is thought by some, that the Scriptures are a mere record of transactions that passed many hundred years ago, and that, however true and authentic they may be, they are no otherwise interesting to us than as matters of curiosity and pleasing instruction. Even the Epistles are supposed to relate only to the particular churches to which they were written: and thus the use of the Scriptures with respect to ourselves is wholly superseded. But we are abundantly guarded against this fatal error by the application which the inspired writers themselves make of numerous passages which at first sight appear to be as remote from us as any in the Bible. We notice also that other appellation given to the Scriptures, "the Sword of the Spirit." In a variety of views this description of them is just and appropriate. It is by the Scriptures that the Holy Spirit speaks to men. He did indeed in the early ages of the world enlighten men by dreams and visions; but since the publication of the written Word, and especially since the completion of the sacred canon, he has called men to the law and to the testimony. "They have Moses and the prophets," says our Lord; "let them hear them:" and again, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life." We do not say, indeed, that the Holy Spirit never uses any other means of quickening

or comforting the souls of men ; but the Scriptures are the means by which he usually works ; nor does he ever work at all, but in a perfect conformity to them.

The Scriptures are further called the Sword of the Spirit, because they derive all their power from the Spirit. In themselves they are like a Sword sheathed, and lying upon the ground ; they are a dead letter : they convey no spiritual light : they impart no spiritual energy : they carry with them neither conviction nor consolation : whether read or preached, they are equally without effect. Paul was conversant with the Scriptures before his conversion, but could not see in them that Jesus was the Christ, nor could he learn from them the temper and disposition of a child of God. The ministry of Christ was attended with but small success, nor did the number of those who were converted by the Apostles bear any proportion to that of those who rejected their message ; and in the instances wherein they did succeed, the success was not owing to Paul who planted, or to Apollos who watered, but to God, who gave the increase. The Word then only came with any beneficial influence, when it came not in word only, "but in the Holy Ghost, and in demonstration of the Spirit of power ;" and Lydia would have remained as unconcerned as others, if the Lord had not opened her heart to attend to the things that were spoken.

But there is yet another reason why the Scriptures are called the Sword of the Spirit ; namely, that by them he has wrought the most stupendous miracles in the conversion of men. They are indeed "the rod of his strength," and have effected far greater miracles than ever the rod of Moses did. By them he has

changed the hearts of men instantaneously, thoroughly, abidingly. By them, in the space of one hour, he transformed three thousand murderers into the very image of their God. In his hands, the Word was "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow;" it laid open the inmost thoughts of men; and through God it is still mighty to destroy the strongholds of sin and Satan: and when it shall have "free course, and be glorified" in the world, when he shall gird it on his thigh, and ride on prosperously in his career, it shall be "very sharp in the heart of the king's enemies," and all nations shall be subdued unto the obedience of faith. This is the weapon with which the Christian is armed, and with which he shall conquer. To the eye of sense, indeed, he goes forth only like David, with his sling and a stone, against Goliath; but like him, "he shall be strong and do exploits." With this, he is "thoroughly furnished unto all good works," nor shall any of his enemies be able to stand before him.

To illustrate the virtues of this Sword, we shall proceed to show its usefulness to him in all his combats. It is needless to make any remarks on the utility of a Sword in general, since every one must, of necessity, be well acquainted with it; but the particular manner in which the Scriptures answer the end of a Sword to the Christian is not so obvious. We may well therefore examine this point with care and accuracy, in order that we ourselves may be enabled to handle the weapon provided for us, and use it with dexterity and success. The Christian's enemies are the world, the flesh, and the devil; and the Scripture enables him to defeat

them, first, by its clear directions. Does the flesh plead for any unhallowed indulgence ? The Scripture, says, "Abhor that which is evil ; cleave to that which is good." Does the world solicit his embrace ? the Scripture says again, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." Does Satan exert his wiles in order to deceive ? the Scripture says, "Him resist." And it is worthy of remark, that it was by means of the directions of Scripture that our Saviour himself vanquished his wicked adversary.

The Scripture aids us, in the next place, by its powerful motives. As for all the motives that reason can suggest, the experience of all ages has proved them weak and inefficient. But the Scripture sets before us the happiness of heaven, and the misery of hell ; and thus with irresistible efficacy addresses itself to our hopes and our fears. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things," saith the Lord, "but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him ;" he "draws back unto perdition." The Scripture gives us a farther advantage over our enemies by means of its rich encouragements. Not to mention the eternal rewards that have just been adverted to, the Scripture promises that God will be with us in every conflict, and beat down our adversaries before our face. "Fear not," says he, "for I am with thee ; be not dismayed : for I am thy God : I will strengthen thee ; yea, I will help thee ; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." "Fear not, thou worm Jacob ;" for "thou shalt thresh the mountains." Now what can withstand a man that is armed with such promises as these ? What can oppose any effectual obstacle in his

way? Are his enemies numerous? he says, They are more that are with me, than they that are against me. Does he feel himself weak? he says, God will perfect his own strength in my weakness.

The last advantage which we shall mention as derived from the Scripture is that which it affords by means of its instructive examples. How can any one relax his determination to destroy sin, when he contemplates the destruction which sin has brought on those who yielded to its baneful influence? Can he despair, that considers for one moment the case of David, of Manasseh, of the dying thief? Can he despair, who sees the persecuting Saul arrested in his career, or who reads the catalogue of crimes of which the Corinthian converts had been guilty? It may be that he is induced to think there is something peculiar in his case, which justifies in an extraordinary degree his desponding fears. But when he hears that "no temptation can take him but that which is common to man," and then surveys that cloud of witnesses who were once conflicting like himself, but are now in heaven attesting the power and faithfulness of a redeeming God, he cannot but say, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou wast a liar and a murderer from the beginning, and shall I credit thy lies to the disparagement of my God?"

In this way it was that the saints of old triumphed. "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?—There-

fore, the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." A completer triumph than this cannot possibly be conceived. Yet thus will the Scripture enable us to triumph, if we duly mark the examples which it sets before us.—SIMEON.

THE WAR-SONG OF GIDEON.*

On, on, my companions, the foe in his camp
Rests secure, unsuspecting of danger;
Be our weapons the trumpet, the pitcher, the lamp,
For the Lord will be Israel's avenger.

Brave warriors and true,
There is conquest for you,
But disgrace for the cohorts of Midian;
While we gaze on the sight,
Be the watchword to night;—
"The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon."

Wait, soldiers, in silence! while darkness shall shroud
Our course till the signal-word's spoken;
Then quick let each trumpet be sounded aloud,
And swift let each pitcher be broken.

Jehovah alone
From his heavenly throne,
Shall scatter the forces of Midian;
And Israel shall shout,
On beholding the rout;
"The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon."

* Judges vii. 18.

The Christian's Spear.

COURAGE.—VALOUR.

L



THE SPEAR.



THE SPEAR.

THE CHRISTIAN'S SPEAR.

COURAGE.—VALOUR.

“ All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand Banners rise into the air
With orient colours waving: with them rose
A forest huge of Spears; and thronging Helms
Appeared, and serried Shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable.

Him thus intent, Ithuriel with his Spear
Touched lightly; for no falsehood can endure
Touch of celestial temper, but returns
Of force to its own likeness.”

MILTON.

Historical Notice.

SPEARS, as offensive weapons, are as ancient and as universal as the shield is for defence. In fact, these two seem, of all others, to be the most general of offensive and defensive arms. The origin of a Spear is very easily traced. A stick sharpened at one end, and hardened in the fire, was probably the first Spear, and continues to be the only offensive weapon of some

savages. Attention would, of course, be directed to the improvement of its point, in order to render it a more complete instrument of destruction ; and, for this purpose, horn, fish-bone, flints, etc. were employed, as they still are by the rude people to whom the use of metals is unknown. Brass, or rather copper, was no doubt the first metal used for this and other purposes, and it continued to be employed long after the use of iron was known. The epithet "brazen" is continually applied to Spears in Homer ; and we might almost suspect that they were wholly of brass, were it not probable that he merely intended to describe them as having the head and heel of that metal, the wooden shaft being also perhaps covered or decorated with it. It seems certain, at all events, that the Spear-heads were of brass ; for all those that are not simply mentioned as "brazen Spears" are, with some variety of expression, like that of Teucer,

" Rough-grained, acuminate, sharp with brass."

Even the gods in Homer are furnished with brazen Spears. Herodotus, in speaking of the Massagetæ, tells us that their Spears, the points of their arrows, and their battle-axes, were of brass. From this it is clear that the whole was of brass, or covered with brass, else he would have said, as well of the Spears, as of the arrows, that they were *headed* with that metal. Such seem to have been known to the Hebrews, since the Spear is, in the Hebrew poetry, sometimes called, as in Homer, the "glittering Spear," which seems to imply, that something more than the head was of polished metal. Indeed, the lance which Goliath

carried, besides his great heavy Spear, is expressly described as a brazen lance, improperly rendered "target."^a Iron, steel, and other metals, were afterwards employed in pointing and decorating the Spears.

We know little about the construction of the Hebrew Spears ; and, in so simple an instrument, nothing very peculiar is to be expected, as we find the same forms, with little variation, in nations the most remote from each other. Like other nations, the Hebrews seem to have had two kinds of Spears, one a missile, to be discharged at the foe, and the other for giving thrusts. It would seem, however, that the same weapon was often made to serve both purposes on occasion, as it certainly did with Homer's heroes. They begin their combats with throwing their Spears at each other ; then each endeavours to recover the Spear he has thrown, and falls to close onset. It is evident that, in this case, a person who could not recover his own Spear, would, in most instances, be able to secure that which had been thrown by the other ; and, as, no doubt, every one preferred his own weapon, there was, perhaps, an understanding between the combatants, that each should be allowed to recover his own, if both had been ineffectually thrown. It is else difficult to understand how it happens that the heroes so long retain possession of the same favourite Spear, which they are continually throwing away. Some of the heroes came into action, however, like Goliath, with two Spears, one carried behind the buckler, and the other in the right hand.

^a 1 Sam. xvii. 6.

Probably, one was a lance, intended to be thrown in the first instance, and the other a Spear for closer action ; or, it is possible, that the one was merely intended as a provision against the loss of the other. So far as the Spear and javelin were distinct, the former seems to have no determined size any more than the latter. We read of them as long and short among different people, or individuals. Great length in the Spear was, however, usually affected. Of Hector, it is said:—

“ Eleven cubits length
Of massy Spear he bore, its brazen point
Star-bright, and collared with a ring of gold,”

This was a moderate length of Spear, compared with the *sarissa* of the Macedonians, which is stated, by different ancient authors, to have been of the scarcely credible length of sixteen cubits, that is, about eight yards. That some of the Hebrew Spears were of great length (perhaps the length was a token of dignity) will be inferred from the fact, that Joshua's Spear, when he held it up, served as a signal to the ambuscade in the affair of Ai.^b The Romans reduced their Spears to a more moderate length. Those used in the time of the Emperors were generally between six and seven feet long, including the point. But we incline to think that perhaps the most probable representation of the Hebrew Spear, is that still retained by the Arabs, and which serves both for thrusting, and for throwing to a short distance. It is about twelve feet long, with a pointed head of iron or steel. It is often quite plain ;

^b Josh. viii. 18—26.

but sometimes it has two balls or tufts of black ostrich feathers, as large as fists, placed at a short distance from each other towards the top ; the upper ball being fringed with short white ostrich feathers. These ornaments give the weapon a rather elegant appearance. It is only thrown by an Arab to a short distance, and when he is sure of his aim : generally at a horseman whom he is pursuing, and cannot overtake. To strike with the lance, he poises it for a time over his head, and then thrusts it forward, or else holds and shakes it at the height of the saddle. A pursued Arab continually thrusts his lance backwards to prevent the approach of the pursuer's mare, and sometimes kills either the pursuer, or his mare, by dexterously throwing the point of his lance behind. It will be observed that the weapon has at the lower extremity an iron spike, which alone is often sufficient for these purposes. The Hebrew Spears were furnished in the same manner, and applied to exactly the same uses. Abner was pursued by the swift-footed Asahel, who would not be persuaded to desist. "He refused to turn aside : wherefore Abner with the hinder end of the Spear smote him under the fifth rib, that the Spear came out behind him ; and he fell down there, and died."^c This spike at the lower end is intended for the purpose of sticking the Spear into the ground, when the warrior is at rest. This is a common custom in the East : and it was usual among the Hebrews. When Saul pursued David into the wilderness of Ziph, he is described as asleep in his encampment, with his "Spear stuck in the ground at his bolster."^d

^c 2 Sam. ii. 23.^d 1 Sam. xxvi. 7.

This also was the custom among Homer's warriors, whose Spears were similarly furnished for the same purpose. Thus, when Nestor and Ulysses go in the night to Diomede :—

“ Him sleeping armed before his tent, they found
Amidst his sleeping followers ; with their shields
Beneath their heads they lay ; and at the side
Of each, stood planted in the soil his Spear
On its inverted end ; their polished heads
All glittered like Jove's lightning from afar.”

The Arabs have also a shorter kind of lance, which we may properly call the javelin, perhaps answering to that of the Hebrews, and which can be hurled to a considerable distance. This, among them, is chiefly used by those who act on foot. The ancient darts and javelins were too various for us to describe particularly. We are perhaps best acquainted with those of the Romans, which may be fairly taken as types of the rest. One of them was a light kind of dart, about three feet long, and not more than an inch thick, with a point four inches long. It was a sort of hand arrow. The point was made to taper to so fine an end, that it bent at its first stroke, so as to prevent the enemy from throwing it back again. These weapons were used by the light armed troops, who carried several of them in the left hand, with which they held the buckler, leaving the right hand free, either to throw the darts, or use the sword. Something of this sort, but probably less delicate, may have been the “darts.” Of this kind seem to have been the darts (*shebatim*) of which Joab took three in his hand, and struck them through the heart of Absalom, as he hung on the tree.* Besides these slender darts,

* 2 Sam. xviii. 14.

the Romans had other javelins longer, and stronger, and heavier. The two principal sorts were between four and five feet long ; and the metal was carried half way down the haft, which in one sort of javelin was square, and in another round. These weapons were discharged at the enemy in commencing an action ; but if there were no time, or distance for this, the soldiers threw their missiles to the ground, and assailed the foe sword in hand. There are many allusions in the Greek and Latin poets, and some in Scripture to poisoning of the javelin, its whistling motion through the air, and the clash of the adverse missiles striking against each other. So Virgil—

“ Poised in his lifted arm, his lance he threw ;
The winged weapon, whistling in the wind,
Came driving on, nor missed the mark designed.”

And again—

“ Thick storms of steel from either army fly,
And clouds of clashing darts obscure the sky.”

The ancient javelins were not always discharged entirely by the hand, the projection being in some instances assisted by a strap girt around the middle. There was also in use a sort of harpoon, that is, a dart, to the head of which was fastened a long strap, which the warrior retained when he discharged the dart, in order to draw it back again.—KITTO.

Scripture Illustration.

And the Lord said unto Joshua, “Stretch out the Spear that is in thy hand toward Ai ; for I will give it

into thine hand.” And Joshua stretched out the Spear that he had in his hand toward the city.^f Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel : for the Philistines said, “ Lest the Hebrews make them swords or Spears.”—So it came to pass in the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor Spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan : but with Saul and with Jonathan his son was there found.^g And the staff of his (Goliath's) Spear was like a weaver's beam ; and his Spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron.^h These be the names of the mighty men whom David had : the Tachmonite that sat in the seat, chief among the captains ; the same was Adino the Eznite : he lift up his Spear against eight hundred, whom he slew at one time.—And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man, of Kabzeel, who had done many acts, he slew two lion-like men of Moab : he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow : and he slew an Egyptian, a goodly man : and the Egyptian had a Spear in his hand ; but he went to him with a staff, and plucked the Spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own Spear.ⁱ And to the captains over hundreds did the Priest give king David's Spears and shields, that were in the temple of the Lord. And the guard stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king.^k Therefore set I in the lower places behind the wall, and on the higher places, I even set the people after their families with their swords,

^f Josh. viii. 18.^g 1 Sam. xiii. 19, 22.^h 1 Sam. xvii. 7.ⁱ 2 Sam. xxiii. 8, 20, 21.^k 2 Kings xi. 10, 11.

their Spears, and their bows.—And it came to pass from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the Spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons ; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah. They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.¹ So he (the chief captain) called unto him two centurions, saying, “ Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cæsarea, and horsemen three score and ten, and Spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night.”^m

Be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land.ⁿ Be strong, and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them ; for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee ; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.^o And he gave Joshua the son of Nun a charge, and said, “ Be strong and of a good courage ; for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I swear unto them : and I will be with thee.”^p Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee : turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.—Have not I commanded thee ? Be strong, and of a good courage ; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed ; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.^q And as soon as we heard

¹ Neh. iv. 13, 16, 17.

^o Deut. xxxi. 6.

^m Acts xxiii. 23.

^p Deut. xxxi. 23.

ⁿ Numb. xiii. 20.

^q Josh. i. 7, 9.

these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you : for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.^r And Joshua said unto them, " Fear not, nor be dismayed ; be strong and of good courage : for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.^s And they (the children of Israel) slew of Moab at that time about ten thousand men, all lusty, and all men of valour ; and there escaped not a man.^t And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him (Gideon), and said unto him, " The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour."^u Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valour.^v And when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, he took him unto him.^w Behold I have seen a son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite,—a mighty valiant man,—and a man of war, and the Lord is with him.^x Only be thou valiant for me, and fight the Lord's battles.^y Therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant.^z He also that is valiant, whose heart is as the heart of a lion, shall utterly melt : for all Israel knoweth that thy father (David) is a mighty man, and they which be with him are valiant men.^a Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God : and the Lord do that which seemeth him good.^b And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour : and Solomon seeing the young man that he was industrious, he made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph.^c Now

^r Josh. ii. 11.^s Josh. x. 25.^t Judg. iii. 29.^u Judg. vi. 12.^v Judg. xi. 1.^w 1 Sam. xiv. 52.^x 1 Sam. xvi. 18.^y 1 Sam. xviii. 17.^z 2 Sam. ii. 7.^a 2 Sam. xvii. 10.^b 2 Sam. x. 12.^c 1 Kings xi. 28.

Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria : he was also a mighty man in valour.^d And the sons of Tola were valiant men of might in their generations.^e And David said to Solomon his son, "Be strong and of good courage, and do it : fear not, nor be dismayed : for the Lord God, even my God, will be with thee ; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."^f What shall I more say ? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae ; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets ; who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.^g

The quiver rattleth against him (the horse),
The glittering Spear and the shield.^h

The sword of him that layeth at him (Leviathan) cannot hold :

The Spear, the dart, nor the habergeon.—

Darts are counted as stubble :

He laugheth at the shaking of a Spear.ⁱ

My soul is among lions :

And I lie even among them that are set on fire,

Even the sons of men, whose teeth are Spears and arrows,

And their tongue a sharp sword.^k

^d 2 Kings v. 1.

^e 1 Chron. vii. 2.

^f 1 Chron. xxviii. 20.

^g Heb. xi. 32—34.

^h Job xxxix. 23.

ⁱ Job xli. 26, 29.

^k Ps. lvii. 4.

Through God we shall do valiantly :
 For he it is that shall tread down our enemies.¹
 The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles
 of the righteous :
 The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.
 The right hand of the Lord is exalted ;
 The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.^m
 They bend their tongues, like their bow, for lies :
 But they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth.ⁿ
 Why are thy valiant men swept away ?
 They stood not, because the Lord did drive them.^o
 The horseman lifteth up both the bright sword and the
 glittering Spear :
 And there is a multitude of slain, and a great number
 of carcases.^p

SATAN BRUISED.^q

Ye armies of the living God,
 In his all-conquering name,
 Lift up your Banners, and aloud
 Your leader's grace proclaim.
 What though the prince of hell invade
 With showers of fiery darts,
 And join to the fierce lion's roar,
 The serpent's wily arts ;
 Jesus, who leads his hosts to war,
 Shall tread the monster down,
 And every faithful soldier share
 The triumph and the crown !

¹ Ps. ix. 12.^m Ps. cxviii. 15. 16.ⁿ Jer. ix. 3.

• Jer. xlv. 15.

^p Nahum iii. 3.^q Rom. xvi. 20.

So Israel on the haughty necks
Of Canaan's tyrants trod,
And sung their Joshua's conquering sword,
And sung their faithful God.

DODDRIDGE.

Doctrinal Instruction.

The Christian, of all men, needs courage and resolution. Indeed, there is nothing he doth as a Christian, or can do, but is an act of valour. A cowardly spirit is beneath the lowest duty of a Christian. "Be thou strong, and very courageous, that thou mayest"—what? stand in battle against those warlike nations?—No, but "that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses, my servant, commanded thee."^r It requires more prowess and greatness of spirit to obey God faithfully, than to command an army of men; to be a Christian, than to be a captain. What seems less than for a Christian to pray? yet this cannot be performed aright, without a princely spirit; as Jacob is said to behave himself like a prince, when he did but pray; for which he came out of the field God's banneret. Indeed, if you call that prayer which a carnal person performs, nothing is more poor and dastard-like. Such a one is as great a stranger to this enterprise, as the craven soldier is to the exploits of a valiant chieftain. The Christian in prayer comes up close to God, with a humble boldness of faith, and takes hold of him, wrestles with him, yea, will not let him go without a

^r Josh. i. 7.

blessing, and all this in the face of his own sins, and Divine justice, which let fly upon him from the fiery mouth of the law ; while the other's boldness in prayer is but the child, either of ignorance in his mind, or hardness in his heart ; whereby not feeling his sins, and not knowing his danger, he rushes upon duty with a blind confidence, which soon quells, when conscience awakes, and gives him the alarm that his sins are upon him, as the Philistines on Samson : alas, then in a fright the poor-spirited wretch throws down his weapon, flees the presence of God with guilty Adam, and dares not look him in the face. Indeed, there is no duty in a Christian's whole course of walking with God, or acting for God, but is lined with many difficulties, which shoot like enemies through the hedges at the Christian, whilst he is marching towards heaven : so that he is put to dispute every inch of ground as he goes. There are only a few noble-spirited souls, who dare take heaven by force, that are fit for this calling.—GURNALL.

Having found the comforts and supports of the Lord's favour in times past ; let us not faint, but verily hope to see his goodness in the land of the living." Let us encourage others to wait for the Lord, and not to yield to fear in the midst of dangers and enemies ; for his grace will be sufficient for their support and deliverance. And whatever we may meet with in this dying world, he will strengthen our hearts ; and we shall see and enjoy his goodness, in the land of the living, in heaven, where sin and death never entered. Let us, then, I say, encourage each other to wait on the Lord, with patient expectation, and with fervent prayer.

He, who is in Christ a new creature, may rejoice in all the precious promises which God hath spoken in his holiness, and by his Holy One ; and may consider the whole ransomed inheritance as his own reversion : and the present privileges to which he is called, and the sanctifying and comforting influences of the Spirit which he experiences, are the sure earnest of heavenly glory. If Christ be ours, all things are ours ; mercy, grace, peace, wisdom, righteousness, strength and victory, life and death, angels and men, earth and heaven are ours ; and all things shall, in one way or other, be rendered subservient to our eternal good. We are not, however, as yet made complete conquerors ; and no true believer will abuse these truths, to the allowed indulgence of sloth or vain confidence. We are still called to put on, and use our spiritual armour, and to prepare for fresh conflicts, perhaps more trying than any which we have yet experienced ; trusting, however, in God to lead us forth and support us, and to give us strength in every time of trouble, we may do valiantly, and tread down all our enemies, and we shall ere long obtain the conqueror's crown. But vain is the help or salvation of man, or of creatures, even far more in things spiritual and eternal, than in our temporal concerns, so that those who trust and pray to saints and angels, and expect salvation from them, will be overcome by the enemy, and will finally perish. But our Mediator, through whom we come to the Father, and trust in him is "Emmanuel, God over all, blessed for evermore ;" and believers, when strong in faith, can do all things through Christ that strengthens them. The church also, over which oppressors have so often exulted, as if the

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Lord had cast her off, shall speedily triumph over them all; and while those who willingly submit to our anointed King, shall share his glories, all his foes shall be put under his feet.

The good soldier of Christ must be ready, at his Captain's word, to venture into the most perilous situations, and to endure the most extreme hardships. He ought therefore to be self-denying and courageous; one who loves his Leader, and is very zealous in his cause; and who firmly believes that he can make up all losses to him, even the loss of his life, which no other prince or general can do for his soldiers. It is highly desirable that those who are engaged in this holy warfare, shall be exempted from the necessity of attending to secular business; but all who would please their Lord must avoid whatever is not absolutely necessary, and every thing which is entangling. While numbers wholly disregard these rules, some, who are active, and seem to strive for the mastery, are not careful to strive lawfully; for they either spend their zeal about outward forms, human inventions, and doubtful disputations; or they use unsanctified weapons, furnished by bigotry and resentment; or those which involve a measure of duplicity and dissimulation. We should also labour in patience and hope, assured that "in due season we shall reap, if we faint not," without vainly expecting to receive our reward, till we have given proof of our persevering diligence.

Faith will enable a man to serve God and his generation, in whatever way he may be employed, whether in governing or reforming nations, or defending them, by crushing the power of iniquitous assailants; or in preaching the gospel, and boldly testifying against the

crimes of the most mighty and implacable of its opposers ; or by working righteousness, and obtaining promises in a more obscure station. It will influence a man to such prompt obedience, disinterested diligence, and warranted expectation, as will insure all needful success in his undertakings. It will also prepare him for facing any dangers ; and though we do not now expect to stop the mouths of lions, or to “quench the violence of fire,” yet we are authorized to look for proportionable supports and consolations, if called to end our pilgrimage by the hand of violence. But we are chiefly concerned in the spiritual warfare ; and in this, by faith, we shall out of weakness be made strong, wax “valiant in fight, and put to flight the armies of the aliens.”—SCOTT.

We are apt to be elated in the time of victory, and to arrogate to ourselves some portion of the glory. But God solemnly cautions us against this ; and if, with Nebuchadnezzar, or Sennacherib, we take the glory to ourselves, the time is nigh at hand when God will fearfully abase us. We cannot do better than take the psalmist for our pattern ; he was enabled to perform the most astonishing feats, and was honoured with the most signal victories ; yet so careful is he to give the glory to God, that he repeats again and again the same grateful acknowledgments, confessing God to be the sole author of his success, and ascribing to him the honour due unto his name. Let it be remembered, that “our enemies still live and are mighty ;” and therefore we must not boast as if the time were come for us to put off our armour. We need the same power to keep down our enemies, as to bring them down at first ;

we should soon fall a prey to the tempter, if left one moment to ourselves. Let our eyes therefore be to Jesus "the Author and Finisher of our faith," depending on his mighty power for strength according to our day, and for the accomplishment of the promise which he hath given us, that "no weapon formed against us shall ever prosper."—SIMEON.

THERE THE WEARY ARE AT REST.

Courage, my soul ! behold the prize
The Saviour's love provides ;
Eternal life beyond the skies,
For all whom here he guides.

The wicked cease from troubling there,
The weary are at rest ;
Sorrow, and sin, and pain, and care,
No more approach the blest.

A wicked world, and wicked heart,
With Satan now are joined ;
Each acts a too successful part
In harassing my mind.

But fighting in my Saviour's strength,
Though mighty are my foes,
I shall a conqueror be at length
O'er all that can oppose.

Then why, my soul, complain or fear ?
The crown of glory see !
The more I toil and suffer here,
The sweeter rest will be.

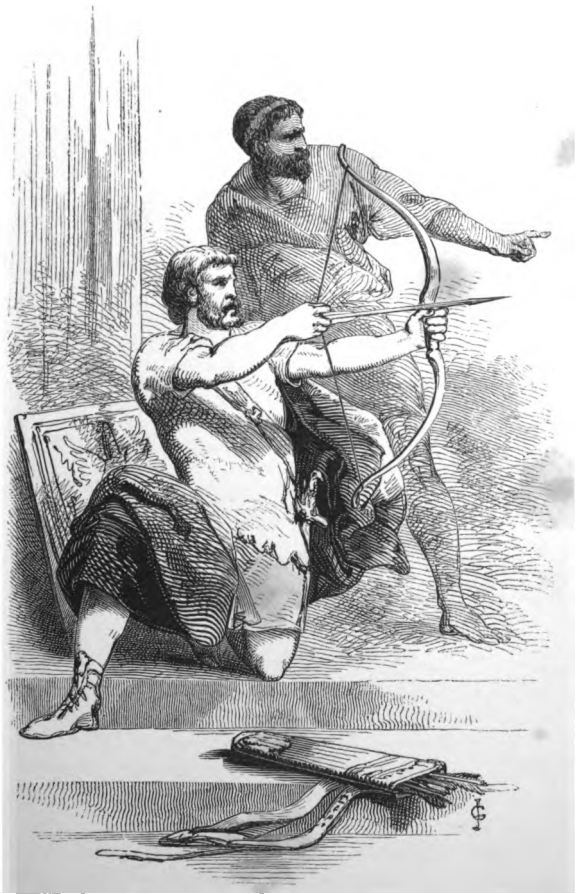
NEWTON.

The Christian's Bow and Arrows.

DIVINE STRENGTH.



THE BOW.



THE BOW.

THE CHRISTIAN'S BOW AND ARROWS.

DIVINE STRENGTH.

From the sword at noon-day wasting,
From the noisome pestilence,
In the depth of midnight blasting,
God shall be thy sure defence ;
Fear not thou the deadly quiver,
When a thousand feel the blow ;
Mercy shall thy soul deliver,
Though ten thousand be laid low.

MONTGOMERY.

Historical Notice.

THE most ancient offensive or defensive arms seem also to be those which are the most universal ; because that simplicity of construction which leads to early invention, leads also to independent discovery among different and unconnected nations. This applies to the Bow, which we find to have been very extensively diffused. It exists among nations the most brutal, or ignorant, or savage, and even in the islands which lie most remote from the continent ; although, indeed, there have been some nations among whom no trace of

its existence can be discovered. The Bow was well known to the Hebrews long before the time of David's engagement with the Philistines ;^a but it does not appear that it was used to any considerable extent as a military weapon. We read of no body of archers in the Hebrew army till after David's time ; but very large bodies of archers are subsequently mentioned. They appear to have been chiefly Benjamites, who seem, throughout their history, to have been remarkable for their partiality to missile weapons. The archers of Ephraim are, however, mentioned once. The frequent reference to archery in the Psalms would alone suffice to show the interest which David took in the subject. The Bible itself bears witness to the extreme antiquity of the Bow. Ishmael, when banished from his father's tents, "dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer;" and his nephew, Esau, employed the Bow in his hunting. Very probably, the invention of the Bow originated in the desire to obtain a weapon for the distant attack of animals, whose strength or swiftness rendered a close assault difficult or dangerous. Such a weapon would, of course, soon come to be employed against man ; and to this we find allusions towards the end of Genesis, where, speaking of Joseph, the dying Jacob says : "The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him. But his (own) Bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong."^b Here the strength of the arms is properly alluded to, a strong arm being necessary to bend a strong Bow. The aged patriarch had on a former occasion, told Joseph :

^a 1 Sam. xxxi. 3.

^b Gen. xlix. 23, 24.

“Moreover I have given thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my Bow.”^c

The ancient Bows were, for the most part, of wood, but we sometimes read of horn being employed. Those of wood were tipped with horn, and those of horn, often gold or silver. Indeed, the Bow was sometimes wholly of metal, as steel or brass ; and such are mentioned in Scripture.^d These, of course, were, from their stiffness, bent with great difficulty ; whence David, in the last-cited text, properly mentions it as a proof of the extraordinary strength with which the Lord had endowed him, that a Bow of steel was broken by his arms. Thus, on account of the force required to bend some ancient Bows, whether of wood, metal, or horn, it was often proposed as a trial of strength to bend some particular Bow ; and we find ancient heroes glorying in the possession and use of a Bow which no one could bend but themselves. Such was the famous Bow of Ulysses. It had remained among his treasures during the twenty years of his absence from Ithaca. In the end it was agreed, that the hand of his supposed widow should be given to him who, out of the numerous suitors, should be able to bend this Bow, and to send the Arrow through twelve rings. The Bow was of horn, and the string had remained unhitched at one end, as usual, when the weapon was not in use. Not one of the suitors was able even so far to bend the Bow as to hitch on the string at the loosened end, although they tried to relax the rigidity of the Bow by chafing

^c Gen. xlviii. 22.

^d Job xx. 24 ; Ps. xviii. 34.

it with suet before the fire. At last Ulysses himself, who was present in the disguise of a beggar, takes it, and the description of the manner in which he deals with it is highly interesting.

“ He now with busy look, and curious touch,
Explored the Bow, now viewing it remote,
Now near at hand, aware that, haply, worms
Had, in his absence, drilled the solid horn.
When the wary hero, wise,
Had made his hand familiar with the Bow,
Poling it and examining—at once—
As when in harp and song adept, a bard
Strings a new lyre, extending first the cords,
He knits them to the frame at either end,
With promptest ease ; with such Ulysses strung
His own huge Bow, and with his right hand thrilled
The nerve, which in its quick vibration, sang
As with a swallow's voice
He seized a shaft, which, at the table's side
Lay ready drawn. . . . He lodged the reed
Full in the Bow-string, drew the parted head
Home to his breast, and, aiming as he sat,
At once dismissed it. Through the numerous rings
Swift flew the gliding steel, and, issuing, sped
Beyond them.”

We may suppose that such a Bow as this, and such as David referred to, is that in the hands of the Persian king, who, in the original sculpture at Tackt-i-Bostan, is represented as of colossal proportions, in the act of shooting at wild boars. It is observable, that in the above extract, and in the other descriptions of Homer, the end of the Arrow is drawn home to the breast, rather than to the right ear, as in Egyptian and Persian figures, and in the more modern practice both of the east and west. The length of the ancient Bows

seems to have been very various, but so far as we can collect, those intended for efficient use, and not merely for teaching archery, were seldom less than four feet long, or more than six. Somewhat above five feet may have been the average proportion of its length.

The Bow-string was, among the ancients, formed of leather thongs, horsehair, or the sinews of oxen. The Arrows were usually of reed, or light wood, headed with bone, ivory, sharp stone, brass, or iron. They were sometimes simply pointed, but oftener barbed, or leaf-shaped, like a spear-head. Arrow-heads of bronze have been found in Egypt, triangular, in the shape of an elongated cone, with a barb at each angle. The horrible practice of poisoning the points of Arrows, which now exists among many barbarous nations, is very ancient. Ulysses is represented in Homer, as having made a voyage to the island of Ephyre.

“ In his swift bark, seeking some poisonous drug,
Wherewith to taint his brazen Arrows keen,
Which drug, through fear of the eternal gods,
Ilus refused, but readily my sire
Gave to him, for he loved him past belief.”

It is thought that St. Paul alludes to such poisoned weapons, when he exhorts the Ephesians to take “the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.” But more probably the allusion is to another use of Arrows, which was, to fasten combustibles to them, and so send fire against the enemy, or among the dwellings of a besieged place, or the works and engines of a besieging army. There seems a most distinct reference to poisoned Arrows in Job vi. 4 ; and to the custom of shooting combustibles

in Psalm cxx. 4 ; and perhaps the latter reference may be detected in the figurative language which compares lightning to the Arrows of the Almighty.^e The pestilence, and other sudden, devastating and unavoidable calamities, are also described as the Arrows of God. Arrows were usually feathered, generally with the wing-feather of a goose, or other large bird ; hence, and with reference to their swiftness, there was a two-fold propriety in the poetical epithet of "winged," so often applied to these destructive missiles.

The Arrows were kept in a quiver, which was generally either round, or obeliscal, and wider at the open, than at the closed end, as the feathered ends of the Arrows, which were uppermost, required more room than the points. It was slung to the back, so that the archer, by putting his hand over the right shoulder, could easily take them out as wanted. The quiver seems to have been closed by a lid, or overlooping flap of skin, when no immediate occasion for the Arrows was contemplated. The Bow also had its case, in which it was kept, under similar circumstances. It was usually of leather or cloth, and was commonly suspended from the girdle. Taking it from the case, in preparation for action, is what Habakkuk alludes to, "Thy Bow was made quite naked."^f The Bow when out of its case was usually carried on the left arm or shoulder ; but in a sculpture at Tackt-i-Bostan, a king is represented with his Bow about his neck, in such a fashion as might have suggested the Turkish use of the Bow-string in strangling state-offenders.

^e Zech. ix. 14.

^f Hab. iii. 9.

Many of the above particulars are strikingly illustrated in the account which Homer gives of the archery of Pandarus ; and we cite it with the more satisfaction on account of the proximity of the date of the Trojan war to the times now under consideration :—

“ He complied,

And at the word uncased his polished Bow,
The horn of a salacious mountain-goat,
That goat, forth issuing from his cave, himself
In ambush placed, had stricken in the breast,
And back into his cave supine he fell.
Full sixteen palms his measured length of horn
Had spired aloft ; the Bow-smith, root to root,
Adapted each, shaved smooth the wrinkled rind,
Then polished all, and tipped the points with gold.
That Bow he strung, and, stooping to his task,
Prepared it well for use, behind a fence
Of Lycian shields, lest, seeing him, the Greeks,
Should fly to smite him ere the wound were given.
His quiver's lid displaced, he chose a dart
Unflown, full fledged, and barbed with bitterest woe ;
He lodged it on the cord, but ere it flew
To Lycian Phœbus vowed, at his return
To Zelia's walls, in honour of his aid,
A hecatomb, all firstlings of the flock.
Then, seizing fast the reed, he drew the barb
Home to his Bow, the bow-string to his breast.
And when the horn was rounded to an arch,
He twanged it. Whizzed the bow-string, and the reed
With fell impatience started to the goal.”

The Bow was, however, by no means generally used in the Trojan war ; though it was preferred by some individual chiefs. The spear seems to have been considered the more honourable weapon in battle. It would seem, however, that the use of the Bow was cultivated as an accomplishment, useful in the chase, and in occasional combats. Achilles and Ulysses we know

to have been able archers, though we do not find them use the Bow on the field of battle. In later times, we find bodies of archers in the armies of Greece, Persia, and Rome, as well as in that of the Hebrews. The Cretans and Persians were the most famous archers of antiquity. The latter are spoken of in Scripture.^f The conquerors of Babylon are repeatedly described as archers. The Persians, who are intended, were in ancient times famous for their general and very skilful use of the Bow, which was in fact the characterizing arm of that people. Even at present the Bow continues still to be a favourite weapon, although in effective use it has been nearly superseded by the gun. The Psalmist says,^g that God "teacheth my hands to war, so that a Bow of steel is broken by mine arms." Instead of "steel," it has been remarked, we should read "brass." We do not see any difficulty in understanding this text as our version gives it. As it was a test of great strength to bend certain large, and very strong Bows, how much more so to bring the string home with such force and compression, as to break the Bow. Then also there may be an emphasis in "by my arms," which would seem to denote that he could do this with the strength of his arms only, without requiring the assistance of the foot, which was so usually employed that the phrase usually rendered "to *bend* the Bow," is literally "to tread the Bow." We think this brings out a better view than that which modern interpreters have usually chosen, after some of the ancient versions, "maketh my arms like a Bow of brass."—KITTO.

^f Isa. xlii. 18; Jer. xlix. 35 1, 9 14 29 42.

^g Ps. xviii. 34.

The word *Arrow* is often taken figuratively for lightning, and other meteors, (the same as the heathen would call the thunderbolts of their Jupiter,) but there is a passage,^h where it has been thought dubious whether it should be taken literally, for war, or figuratively, for some natural evil.

“Thou shalt have no occasion of fear,
 From the dread by night;
 From the Arrow that flieth by day;
 From the pestilence in darkness walking;
 From the cutting off which destroys at noon day.”

The word rendered pestilence, seems to import a commissioned, a spoken to, evil, from *debir*, to speak; but Parkhurst derives it from driving, an evil which drives men to their graves. The former derivation is most usual; but both senses may coalesce in this example. The cutting off (*keteb*) is used for pestilence, in Deut. xxxii. 24; and Mr. Taylor conceives that the Arrow in this passage means the pestilence also; and that the following lines are exegetical; an idea which is confirmed by two or three passages, which imply, that the Arrows denote the pestilence, by an allusion to this flying weapon. The following is from Busbequius: “I desired to remove to a less contagious air. . . . I received from Solomon, the emperor, this message: that the Emperor wondered what I meant in desiring to remove my habitation. Is not the pestilence God’s Arrow which will always hit his mark? If God would visit me herewith, how could I avoid it? Is not the plague, said he, in my own palace, and yet I do not think of re-

^h Ps. xci. 5.

ⁱ Eng. Edit.

moving?" We find the same opinion expressed in Smith's Remarks, etc., on the Turks:^k "What, say they, is not the plague the Dart of Almighty God? and can we escape the blow he levels at us? is not his hand steady to hit the persons he aims at? can we run out of his sight, and beyond his power?" So Herbert,^l speaking of Curroon, says, "that year his empire was so wounded with God's Arrows of plague, pestilence, and famine, as this thousand years before was never so terrible." Thus, "When I shall send upon them the evil *Arrows* of famine, which shall be for their destruction."^m—CALMET.

Scripture Illustration.

AND he (Jonathan) said unto his lad, "Run, find out now the Arrows which I shoot." And as the lad ran, he shot an Arrow beyond him. And when the lad was come to the place of the Arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, "Is not the Arrow beyond thee?"ⁿ And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers.^o David bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the Bow.^p And Jehu drew a Bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms, and the Arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot.^q Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whercof he died. And Joash, the king of Israel,

* ^k Page 109. ^l Page 99. ^m Ezek. v. 16. ⁿ 1 Sam. xx. 36, 37.
 ^o 1 Sam. xxxi. 3. ^p 2 Sam. i. 18. ^q 2 Kings ix. 24.

came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, "O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!" And Elisha said unto him, "Take Bow and Arrows." And he took unto him Bow and Arrows. And he said to the King of Israel, "Put thine hand upon the Bow." And he put his hand upon it: and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands. And he said, "Open the window eastward." And he opened it. Then Elisha said, "Shoot." And he shot. And he said, "The Arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the Arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them." And he said, "Take the Arrows." And he took them. And he said unto the King of Israel, "Smite upon the ground." And he smote thrice and stayed. And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, "Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice."^r Now these are they that came to David to Ziklag, while he yet kept himself close because of Saul the son of Kish: and they were among the mighty men, helpers of the war. They were armed with Bows, and could use both the right hand and the left in hurling stones and shooting Arrows out of a Bow, even of Saul's brethren of Benjamin.*

The archers have sorely grieved him (Joseph),
 And shot at him, and hated him;
 But his Bow abode in strength,
 And the arms of his hands were made strong

* 2 Kings xiii. 14—19

• 1 Chron. xii. 1, 8.

By the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.[†]

I will spend mine Arrows upon them.—
I will make mine Arrows drunk with blood,
And my sword shall devour flesh.[‡]

The Bows of the mighty men are broken,
And they that stumbled are girded with strength.[‡]

From the blood of the slain,
From the fat of the mighty,
The Bow of Jonathan turned not back,
And the sword of Saul returned not empty.[‡]

For the Arrows of the Almighty are within me,
The poison whereof drinketh up my spirit ;
The terrors of God do set themselves in array against
me.[‡]

He shall flee from the iron weapon,
And the Bow of steel shall strike him through.[‡]

My glory was fresh in me,
And my Bow was renewed in my hand.[‡]

The quiver rattleth against him,
The glittering spear and the shield.[‡]

God is angry with the wicked every day.
If he turn not, he will whet his sword ;
He hath bent his Bow, and made it ready.
He hath also prepared for him the instruments of
death ;

He ordaineth his Arrows against the persecutors.^b

For, lo, the wicked bend their Bow,
They make ready their Arrow upon the string

[†] Gen. xlix. 23, 24.

[‡] Deut. xxxii. 23, 42.

[‡] 1 Sam ii. 4.

[‡] 2 Sam. i. 22.

[‡] Job. vi. 4.

[‡] Job. xx. 24.

[‡] Job. xxix. 20.

[‡] Job. xxxix. 23.

^b Ps. vii. 11—13.

That they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.^c
 Yea, he (the Lord) sent out his Arrows and scattered
 them ;

And he shot out his lightnings and discomfited them.—
 He teacheth my hands to war,
 So that a Bow of steel is broken by mine arms.^d

Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back :
 When thou shalt make ready thine Arrows upon thy
 strings against the face of them.^e

For thine Arrows stick fast in me,
 And thy hand presseth me sore.^f

Thine Arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's
 enemies ;

Whereby the people fall under thee.^g

Who (the wicked) whet their tongue like a sword,
 And bend their Bows to shoot their Arrows, even bitter
 words :

That they may shoot in secret at the perfect :
 Suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.—
 But God shall shoot at them with an Arrow ;
 Suddenly shall they be wounded.^h

The clouds poured out water ;
 The skies sent out a sound :
 Thine Arrows also went abroad.ⁱ

What shall be given unto thee ?
 Or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue ?
 Sharp Arrows of the mighty,
 With coals of juniper.^k
 As Arrows are in the hand of a mighty man ;

^c Ps. xi. 2. ^d Ps. xviii. 14, 34. ^e Ps. xxi. 12. ^f Ps. xxxviii. 2.
^g Ps. xlv. 5. ^h Ps. lxi. 3, 4, 7. ⁱ Ps. lxxvii. 17. ^k Ps. cxx. 3, 4.

So are children of the youth.¹

Cast forth lightning, and scatter them ;
Shoot out thine Arrows, and destroy them.^m

For I will not trust in my Bow,
Neither shall my sword save me.ⁿ

He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth ;
He breaketh the Bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder ;
He burneth the chariot in the fire.^o

There brake he the Arrows of the Bow,
The shield, and the sword, and the battle.^p

They turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their
fathers:

They were turned aside like a deceitful Bow.^q

And Elam bare the quiver
With chariots of men and horsemen,
And Kir uncovered the shield.^r

He gave them as dust to his sword,
And as driven stubble to his Bow.^s

And (he hath) made me a polished shaft ;
In his quiver hath he hid me.^t

Thus saith the Lord of hosts : " Behold, I will break
the Bow of Elam,
The chief of all their might."^u

Their Arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man ;
None shall return in vain.—
Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about :
All ye that bend the Bow,
Shoot at her, spare no Arrows ;
For she hath sinned against the Lord.—

¹ Ps. cxxvii. 4.

^m Ps. cxliv. 6.

ⁿ Ps. xlii. 6.

^o Ps. xlii. 9.

^p Ps. lxxvi. 3.

^q Ps. lxxviii. 57.

^r Isa. xxii. 6.

^s Isa. xli. 2.

^t Isa. xlix. 2.

^u Jer. xlix. 35.

Call together the archers against Babylon ;

All ye that bend the Bow,

Camp against it round about ;

Let none thereof escape.—

Behold a people shall come from the north, and a great nation,

And many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.

They shall hold the Bow and the lance ;

They are cruel, and will not shew mercy.^v

He (the Lord) hath bent his Bow like an enemy, he stood with his right hand as an adversary.^w

He hath bent his Bow, and set me as a mark for the Arrow.

He hath caused the Arrows of his quiver to enter into my veins.^x

I will smite thy Bow out of thy left hand,

And will cause thine Arrows to fall out of thy right hand.^y

I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by Bow, nor by sword nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen.^z

I will break the Bow and the sword, and the battle out of the earth,

And will make them to lie down safely.^a

Therefore the flight shall perish from the swift,

And the strong shall not strengthen his force,

Neither shall the mighty deliver himself :

Neither shall he stand that handleth the Bow ;

^v Jer. i. 9, 14, 29, 41, 42.

^y Ezek. xxxix. 3.

^w Lam. ii. 4.

^z Hos. i. 7.

^x Lam. iii. 12, 13.

^a Hos. ii. 18.

And he that is swift of foot shall not deliver himself :
 Neither shall he that rideth the horse deliver himself.
 And he that is courageous among the mighty,
 Shall flee away naked in that day.^b

Thy Bow was made quite naked,
 According to the oaths of the tribes, even thy word.
 The sun and moon stood still in their habitation :
 At the light of thine Arrows they went,
 And at the shining of thy glittering spear.^c

I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim,
 And the horse from Jerusalem,
 And the battle Bow shall be cut off :
 And he shall speak peace unto the heathen :
 His dominion shall be from sea even to sea,
 And from the river even to the ends of the earth.^d

Out of him came forth the corner,
 Out of him the nail,
 Out of him the battle Bow,
 Out of him every oppressor together.^e

HE TEACHETH MY HANDS TO WAR.^f

Belov'd associates in the strife
 That ends in blessed peace,
 A life of conflict is our life,
 From war we must not cease.
 The soldiers of the cross must fight,
 Till life itself is past ;

Amos ii. 14—16. ^b Hab. iii. 9, 11. ^d Zech. ix. 10, 13. ^e Zech. x. 4.

^f Ps. xviii. 34.

The foe assails them day and night,
Assails them to the last.

But let us still remember this,
To faith it stands disclos'd,
The Lord, who saves us, greater is
Than all who are oppos'd.
We need not flee, we need not fear,
Since he who reigns above,
In all our conflicts will be near
The people of his love.

Our foes are strong, and many too,
Yet why these doubts and fears?
For while we keep our Lord in view,
Our strength is more than theirs.
If thus we face the adverse powers,
If thus we meet the strife,
The victory will then be ours,
And ours a crown of life.

KELLY.

Doctrinal Instruction.

The Christian's strength lies in the Lord, not in himself. The strength of the general, in other hosts, lies in his troops: he flies, as a great commander once said to his soldiers, upon their wings; if their feathers be clipped, their power broken, he is lost. But in the army of saints, the strength of every saint, yea, in the whole host of saints, lies in the Lord of Hosts. God can overcome his enemies without their hands, but they cannot so much as defend themselves without his arm.

It is one of God's names, "The Strength of Israel."^g He was the strength of David's heart; without him this valiant worthy, that could, when held up in His arms, defy him that defied a whole army, behaves himself strangely for fear, at a word or two that dropped from the Philistine's mouth. He was the strength of his hands; "He taught his fingers to fight," and so is the strength of all his saints in this war against sin and Satan. Some propound a question, whether there be a sin committed in the world, in which Satan hath not a part? But if the question were, whether there be any holy action performed without the special assistance of God concurring? that is resolved, "Without me ye can do nothing."^h Thinking strength of God, "Not that we are sufficient as of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God."ⁱ We apostles, we saints, that have habitual grace, yet this lies, like water at the bottom of a well, which will not ascend with all our pumping, till God pour in his exciting grace, and then it comes. To will is more than to think; to exert our will into action, more than both; these are of God, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."^k He makes the heart new, and having made it for heavenly motion, setting every wheel, as it were, in its right place, then he winds it up by his actuating grace, and sets it on going, the thoughts to stir, the will to move, and make towards the holy object presented; yet here the chariot is set, and cannot ascend the hill of action till God puts his shoulder to the wheel. "To will is present with

^g 1 Sam. xv. 29.^h John xv. 5.ⁱ 2 Cor. iii. 5.^k Phil. ii. 13.

me ; but how to perform that which is good I find not."¹—GURNALL.

All our talents and abilities are from God, and all our improvement of them : whatever services we have performed, or however consistent our walk has been, the will and the power have been from him ; "He is our strength, who maketh our way perfect." Ability and success in our spiritual warfare, liberty from sin and Satan, enlargement of the heart in the service of our God, and preservation in the slippery paths of this ensnaring world, are causes for thankfulness, and not for glorying in ourselves. His gentle rebukes and corrections tend to real advancement, as much as our comforts and prosperity do. Armed with the shield of salvation, and "the sword of the Spirit," the Christian Soldier, being "strong in the Lord," will pursue his victories, till he has trodden upon the necks of all his enemies, and received the conqueror's crown. For the Lord liveth, as the God of strength and salvation, and will never leave us nor forsake us, till he has brought us forth from all our enemies, and lifted us upon high, above all that rose up against us. In the prospect of that complete salvation, let us joyfully praise him on the field of battle, surrounded with our enemies, and in the midst of our conflicts : and ere long we shall adore him, and sing praises to his name in more exalted strains, surrounded with millions of the redeemed, and innumerable multitudes of holy angels, who will triumph in our victories, and rejoice in our felicity.

¹ Rom. vii, 18.

Joseph is called "a fruitful bough," or young tree, planted by the water side: he had no more than two sons, yet from them sprang two very numerous tribes; but his prosperity was preceded by base injuries and heavy afflictions. "The archers," or such as were most skilful in the use of the Bow, "had sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him."^m His brethren pursued him with unrelenting envy and enmity, and spared his life only to sell him for a slave. Potiphar's wife tempted, and then slandered him; Potiphar condemned and imprisoned him; and though we do not read of it, it is a singular case indeed, if some of the Egyptians did not revile and envy him. This part may likewise be considered as prophetic of the terrible wars, which his descendants waged, especially with the kingdom of Judah. His weapons, however, in this warfare, failed him not, as a broken or weakened Bow would have done: and his hands and arms, notwithstanding the most fatiguing exertions, were strengthened to use them by the power of the God of Jacob; who, in providence, outwardly protected and prospered him, and by his Spirit endued him inwardly with such strength of faith and of grace, as produced invincible courage, resolution, and perseverance: and thus he was enabled to stand his ground, and to repel every attack of his enemies. His life was preserved, his reputation was cleared, his integrity remained unimpeached; when he rose superior to all opposition, his brethren sued to him, and became dependent on him; and all his enemies bowed before him, and sought his

^m Gen. xlix. 23.

favour. By the Divine assistance and blessing, and through all these trials and troubles, he at length became "the shepherd of Israel," to sustain his father and family, and to take care of them with all their flocks and herds; and "the stone of Israel," the foundation and strong support of their interests. In these respects, as in many other things, he was a remarkable type of the Good Shepherd, and tried Corner Stone of the whole church of God.—SCOTT.

It is the solemn declaration of God, that "by strength shall no man prevail."^a We might hope that men would be convinced of this truth by their own experience. Who amongst us has not made vows and resolutions without number, and broken them again almost as soon as they were made? Who ever resolved to devote himself unfeignedly to God, and did not find that he was unable stedfastly to pursue his purpose? What folly is it, then, to be renewing these vain attempts, when we have the evidence both of Scripture and experience that we cannot succeed! How much better would it be to trust in that Mighty One, on whom help is laid! Learn, then, before it be too late, that without Christ you can do nothing, that "all your fresh springs are in him," and "of him must your fruit be found:" "in him alone shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." If you will not "be strong in him," you will continue "without strength;" but, if once you truly "know him, you shall be strong, and do exploits."

^a 1 Sam. ii. 9.

It is but too common for the Lord's people to be indulging needless fears, like David, when he said, "I shall one day perish by the hands of Saul." But surely such deserve the rebuke which our Lord gave to Peter. "O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?" If thou doubtest the Lord's willingness to serve thee, say, wherefore did he die for thee, even for the chief of sinners?" If thou callest in question his power, what is there in thy case that can baffle Omnipotence? If thou art discouraged on account of thy own weakness, know that the weaker thou art in thyself, the stronger thou shalt be in him, and that 'he will perfect his own strength in thy weakness. If thou fearest on account of the strength and number of thine enemies, he meets thy fears with this salutary admonition: "Say ye not, a confederacy, a confederacy; but sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread." Only trust in him; and, though weak, he will strengthen thee; though faint, he will revive thee; though wounded, he will heal thee; though captive he will liberate thee; though slain, he will raise thee up again, and give thee the victory over all thine enemies. "Be strong," then, "and very courageous;" abhor the thought of indulging a cowardly spirit as long as "God's throne is in heaven;" and assure yourselves with David, that though your enemies encompass you as bees, in the name of the Lord you shall destroy them.—SIMEON.

•

DAVID'S LAMENTATION FOR SAUL AND JONATHAN.*

The beam of the mighty is mantled in night,
His glory is set in the blaze of the light ;
His Bow-string is shaftless, his spear is at rest ;
His sabre unwavering and sighless his breast.

The beauty of Jacob is laid in the dust,
His armour is broken, and cankered with rust ;
His eye is in darkness, a spot on its ray,
His vigour is death, and his bloom is decay.

The hills of Gilboa shall summer no more,
Jehovah's anointed hath stained them with gore ;
Their trees shall be leafless, their verdure destroyed,
Their altar a ruin, and nature a void.

Philistia shall triumph—the pulse of the brave,
Whose thrill was destruction, is lost in the grave
One spirit sublimed them—adversity tried—
They existed in love, and in unity died.

Weep, daughters of Jacob, for Saul and his son !
Attune your bright harps to the deeds they have done ;
The arm of the lion, the foot of the roe,
Weep, daughters of Jacob, be mighty in woe.

Oh, Jonathan ! Jonathan ! ghostless art thou,
There's gore on thy visage, and dust on thy brow :
Yet the angel of beauty is lingering by,
She revels in rapture, and flits to the sky.

Yes, thou art a corse, but thy spirit's above,
Diverging in glory, and beaming in love ;
And friendship is blasted, and saintless her shrine,
My soul has no kindred, and anguish is mine.

The Christian's Greaves and Sandals.



PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL.



GREAVES AND SANDALS



GREAVES AND SANDALS

THE CHRISTIAN'S GREAVES AND SANDALS.

PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL.

Shod with Gospel Preparation
In the paths of promise tread ;
Let the hope of free salvation
As a helmet guard thy head.
When beset with various evils,
Wield the Spirit's two-edged sword ;—
Cut thy way through hosts of devils,
While they fall before the word.

HART.

Historical Notice.

GREAVES were a kind of boots, without feet, for the defence of the legs, made either of bull's hide, or of metal, generally brass, or copper. The ancient Greave usually terminated at the ankle, and rose in front nearly to the top of the knee. It was open behind, but the opposite edges at the open part, nearly met when the Greave was buckled, buttoned, or tied to the leg. There were some kinds that did not reach so high as the knee.

This piece of armour was useful, not only in combat, but for the purpose of guarding the leg against the impediments, such as iron spikes, etc., which the enemy strewed in the way, as well as to enable the warrior to make his way more easily among thorns and briars. It appears from ancient sculpture, that Greaves with the open part in front, and defending the calf rather than the shin, were sometimes in use. Sometimes a Greave was worn on one leg only, and that was the left; that leg, and indeed the left side generally, being advanced in action on account of the buckler, which was borne on the left arm. Homer's heroes usually wore brass Greaves; indeed the 'Greeks are continually called "brazen-greaved Achaians;" whence some suppose that this defence was first, and, for a time, exclusively, used by that people. Greaves were, however, worn by the Trojans as well as the Greeks. Thus, when Paris was arming for the combat with Menelaus—

"His legs he first in polished Greaves enclosed,
With silver studs secured."

We learn from this, that in arming, the Greaves were first put on. The use of Greaves was not confined to warriors, but they were worn by others whose occupations required a defence against thorns. Thus, when Laertes is described as collecting thorns for a fence, it is said—

"Leathern were his Greaves,
Thong-tied, and also patched—a frail defence
Against sharp thorns."

Military Sandals, or boots, are classed with armour. If, with some commentators, we suppose the reference,

"Your feet shod," etc.,^a is to firmness of standing, as in the base, or foundation, of an edifice, the apostle may be well imagined to have had in view those military caligas which were furnished with spikes, to enable those that wore them to stand firm and unmoved. Or if, with others, the allusion is supposed to be merely to the defence of the feet from the roughness of the way, and from the designs of enemies, who were wont to throw caltrops into the field, and to set spikes in the ground, to impede the march, and wound the feet of the soldiers—then, we may well conclude the text to bear a reference to the boots, Greaves, or Sandals, which to defend the feet from such annoyance, were composed of, or furnished with, brass, iron, or other metals.

The same Hebrew word (*naal*,^b) denotes both a Sandal and a shoe; more generally, doubtless, the former than the latter, although always rendered "shoe" in our version of the Old Testament, in which the word "Sandal" does not once occur. It must, indeed, generally be left to the context to determine which is intended; and this the context does not often enable us to say. It is very likely, however, that shoes, properly so called, were in use before this time, for it is probable we are to understand, from the mention of "rams' skins dyed red," in the books of Moses,^c that the Hebrews had the art of preparing and colouring leather. If so, shoes were probably confined to the more comfortable classes of the people; for not only were Sandals of the earliest date, but, so far as a covering for the feet was employed at all, continued in general use for ages after the invention

^a Ephes. vi. 15.^b Ruth iv. 8.^c Exod. xxv. 5.

of shoes. Indeed, down to the present time, shoes have by no means superseded Sandals in the east. When men first thought of some contrivance to defend their feet from being cut by sharp stones, or injured by cold, or scorched by the hot sand, they fastened to the bottom of their feet soles of bark, wood, raw hide, and, ultimately, tanned leather, by means of straps or thongs variously disposed ; but most generally by two, one of which was joined to the sole at the heel, or hollow of the foot, and, after passing round the ankle, had fastened to it another which passed between the great and the second toe.

The progressive history of the Sandal would be better illustrated by cuts than by written explanation.^d From these it will be seen, that it ultimately became an elaborate and ornamental article, with a more complete sole, bound to the foot and leg with lacings in multiplied convolutions, and sometimes decorated with costly ornaments of various kinds. Attention to the Sandals became a foppery in the end ; and we see that Philopæmen in recommending soldiers to give more attention to their warlike accoutrements than to their common dress, advises them to be less nice about their shoes and Sandals, and more careful in observing that their Greaves were kept bright, and fitted well to their legs.^e The Jewish ladies seem to have been very particular about their Sandals, if we may judge from what is said of the bride in Sol. Song, vii. 1 : " How beautiful are thy feet with Sandals, O prince's daughter !" and in the instance of Judith, in the Apocrypha, we observe

^d See Pictorial Bible, Ruth iv. 8.

^e Polybius xi.

that it was not so much the general splendour of her attire, her rich bracelets, rings, and necklaces, that attracted most strongly the attention of the fierce Holofernes ; but it was "her Sandals" that "ravished his eyes."^f

A shoe is a covered Sandal ; and the idea of attaching a covering to the sole, so as to obtain a more complete protection for the foot, was too obvious to be delayed for any considerable length of time. Indeed, at the present day, the shoes generally used in the east, remain something between a complete shoe and a Sandal, or, as we may say, slippers. Many of them have no quarters, and scarcely do more than cover the toes ; yet the natives walk in them with extreme ease, and almost never let them slip from the feet. The common shoe, in Turkey and Arabia, is like our slipper with quarters, except that it has a sharp and prolonged toe turned up. No shoes in Western Asia have ears, and they are generally of coloured leather ; yellow or red morocco in Turkey and Arabia, and green shagreen in Persia. In the latter country the shoe or slipper in most general use (having no quarters) has a very high heel ; but with this exception, the heels in these countries are generally flat. No shoes, or even boots, have more than a single sole, (like what we call *pumps*,) which, in wet weather, generally imbibes the water freely. When the shoe without quarters is used, an inner slipper, with quarters, but without a sole, is worn inside, and the outer one alone is thrown off in entering a house. But in Persia, instead of this inner slipper of

^f Jud. xvi. 9.

leather, they use a worsted sock. Those shoes that have quarters are usually worn without any inner covering for the foot. The peasantry and the nomade tribes usually go barefoot, or wear a rude Sandal, or shoe, of their own manufacture : those who possess a pair of red leather, or other shoes, seldom wear them except on holiday occasions, so that they last a long time, if not so long as among the Maltese, with whom a pair of shoes endures for several generations, being, even on holiday occasions, more frequently carried in the hand than worn on the feet. The boots are generally of the same construction and material as the shoes ; and the general form may be compared to that of the buskin, the height varying from the mid-leg to near the knee. They are of capacious breadth, except among the Persians, whose boots generally fit close to the leg, and are mostly a sort of Russia leather, uncoloured ; whereas those of other eastern people are, like the slippers, of red or yellow morocco. There is also a boot or shoe for walking in frosty weather, which differs from the common one only in having, under the heel, iron tips, which, being partly bent vertically with a jagged edge, give a hold on the ice which prevents slipping. These are particularly useful in ascending or descending the frozen mountain paths. The Sandal with the sole armed with iron points, had doubtless the same use. The shoes of the oriental ladies are sometimes highly ornamental ; the covering part being wrought with gold, silver, and silk, and perhaps set with jewels, real or imitated. The observations therefore made above, in reference to the Sandals of the bride in Solomon's Song, and of Judith, may be equally

applicable to shoes; and indeed it is not certain whether shoes or Sandals are in these instances intended. We have thus spoken first of modern oriental shoes, because we apprehend that they belong to a class of subjects best illustrated by the existing usages of the east. We have spoken from personal observation on this point.

The shoes of the ancient Romans were chiefly of crude untanned leather. Ultimately shoes of tanned leather were usually worn out of doors, by persons in good circumstances; but in-doors they continued to wear Sandals. Wooden shoes were generally worn by poor people, slaves, and peasants; but sometimes rude Sandals, or shoes, of raw leather. None but those who had served the office of Edile were allowed to wear shoes, dressed with alum of a red colour, which we may therefore infer to have been a favourite colour for shoes, as it appears to have been among the Hebrews, and as it is now in Western Asia. The Roman Senators wore shoes, or buskins, of a black colour, with a crescent of gold, or silver, on the top of the foot. Women also appear to have used these ornaments; and perhaps Isaiah refers to something of this sort in chap. iii. 18. The emperor Aurelian forbade men to wear red, yellow, white, or green shoes, allowing them to women only; and Heliogabalus forbade women to wear gold and precious stones in their shoes; and this, with what we have said of modern shoes, helps us to understand in what the splendour of the Hebrew women's shoes consisted. Calmet finds boots of metal in the Scripture, and in Homer; but we imagine that Greaves only are intended in the passages to which he alludes. What Vegetius says about the Roman soldiers having iron

shoes, probably means that the soles were plated, shod, or nailed, with iron. This they certainly were. The nails had sometimes their points outward, probably, as already intimated, to serve as snow or frost shoes, and also to assist in scaling walls in the attack of fortified places. Luxury, however, found its way even to the nails of shoes ; for we are told that in the army of Antiochus most of the soldiers had golden nails under their shoes.

We have not mentioned Egyptian shoes, because we are not aware that anything that can properly be called a shoe occurs in Egyptian paintings and sculptures ; and the Sandals we have already noticed. It is clear, however, that the Egyptians had the art of tanning and dressing leather. This would be alone probable from our finding the art among the Hebrews immediately after they left Egypt ; and that the Egyptians made shoes with leather at some period or other, is testified by Belzoni, who says, "They had the art of tanning leather, with which they made shoes as well as we do, some of which I found of various shapes. They had also the art of staining the leather with various colours, as we do morocco, and actually knew the mode of embossing on it, for I found leather with figures impressed on it, quite elevated. I think it must have been done with a hot iron while the leather was damp." This is important ; because it is fair to infer that the Hebrews were not ignorant of what was known to their neighbours. The shoes which the Hebrews wore when they left Egypt were doubtless of Egyptian manufacture, and probably long continued to afford the model of those which they afterwards used. It is not, however

necessary to suppose that the art of preparing leather, and of forming shoes had, at that early time, arrived at such perfection as is described by Belzoni.

In the absence of very definite information concerning the shoes and Sandals of the Hebrews, the statements we have given concerning those of the modern occupants of Western Asia, and of ancient nations with which the Hebrews were at different times acquainted, will furnish the best assistance which can now be obtained for the elucidation of the various passages of the Old and New Testament in which the equipment of the feet is mentioned.—KITTO.

Shoes, in Scripture, are put for, “The ground under one’s feet;”^g “The weakest means;”^h “Freedom from danger;”ⁱ “A contemptible price;”^k “To cast the shoe over a country, is to subdue that country;”^l “To loose the shoe was a sign of reverence;”^m “of disgrace;”ⁿ “of a contract;”^o “of mourning.”^p

The Apostle exhorts the Ephesians to have their “feet shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace;”^q that is, to have a prepared and resolved frame of heart, which the gospel teaches and works, and which, like leg or foot harness, would enable them to walk with a steady pace in the ways of religion, notwithstanding the hardships, dangers, and difficulties that attend it.

To go barefoot was a sign of mourning and humiliation: David went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet

^g Deut. xxxiii. 25.

^k Amos ii. 6; viii. 6.

ⁿ Deut. xxv. 10.

^h Ps. lx. 8; cviii. 9.

ⁱ Ps. lx. 8.

^o Ruth iv. 7.

^q Ephes. vi. 15.

ⁱ Cant vii. 1.

^m Exod. iii. 5.

^p Ezek. xxiv. 17.

barefoot.^r The man that refused to raise up seed unto his brother deceased, had his shoe taken off by his brother's wife in presence of the elders.^s This was done partly as a sign of his resignation of his right to the woman, and her husband's inheritance, as the plucking off the shoe signifies in Ruth iv. 7 ; and partly as a note of infamy ; to signify that he deserved to be treated like a servant or captive, who, in token of submission and obedience, went barefoot.^t It is said, "Over Edom will I cast out my shoe. I will take possession of them, I will trample upon them, and use them like slaves."^u A pair of shoes, in Amos ii. 6, denotes a small inconsiderable bribe. To bear one's shoes, or untie the latchet of one's shoes, is to perform the meanest services for him.^v—CRUDEN.

John the Baptist says of himself, that he was not worthy to be Sandal-bearer to Our Saviour.^w Writers say, that when Hercules became slave to Omphale, she used to give him correction with her Sandal, which was the most degrading and effeminate kind of correction. So Lucian makes Venus say of Cupid, "Already I have given him some correction ; and, taking him on my knee, have chastised him with my Sandal." But Mr. Morier, in his Second Journey to Persia, mentions a servant of the Ambassador, who was "abundantly beaten on the back with a stick, and on the mouth with a shoe-heel. The King of Persia examined some of

^r 2 Sam. xv. 30. See Isa. xx. 2—4 ; Ezek. xxiv. 17.

^s Deut. xxv. 9.

^t Isa. xx. 4.

^u Ps. lx. 8.

^v See Matt. iii. 11. Mark i. 7. Luke iii. 16.

^w Matt. iii. 11.

his officers, who not answering as he desired, he exclaimed, 'Call the Ferashes, and beat these rogues till they die.' The Ferashes came and beat them violently; and when they attempted to say anything in their own defence, they smote them on the mouth with a shoe, the heel of which was shod with iron." He adds in a note, "This use of the shoe is quite characteristic of the eastern manners described in Scripture. The shoe was always considered as vile, and was never allowed to enter sacred or respected places; and to be smitten with it, is to be subjected to the last ignominy. Paul was smitten on the mouth by the order of Ananias."^x Whether this were with a shoe, may deserve consideration; such ignominy, if that were the case, might well excite Paul's anger, and excuse his threat.—CALMET.

Scripture Illustration.

And he (Goliath) had Greaves of brass upon his legs.^y Gird thyself, and bind on thy Sandals.—Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.^z But be shod with Sandals.^a Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only.^b And thus shall ye eat it (the lamb); with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord's passover.^c Keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee.^d And he (Rehoboam) did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord.^e

^x Acts xxlii. 2.

^y 1 Sam. xvii. 6.

^z Acts xii. 8.

^a Mark vi. 9.

^b 1 Sam. vii. 3.

^c Exod. xii. 11.

^d 1 Chron. xxix. 18.

^e 2 Chron. xii. 14.

Nevertheless there are good things found in thee (Jehoshaphat), in that thou . . . hast prepared thine heart to seek God.^f For as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.^g So Jotham became mighty, because he prepared his ways before the Lord his God.^h So the service of the house of the Lord was set in order. And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly.ⁱ But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, "The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary."^k For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.^l To make ready a people prepared for the Lord.—The day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.^m For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?ⁿ Having your feet shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace.^o

Thy shoes shall be iron and brass ;
 And as thy days, so shall thy strength be.^p
 He will keep the feet of his saints,
 And the wicked shall be silent in darkness ;
 For by strength shall no man prevail.^q

^f 2 Chron. xix. 8.^g 2 Chron. xx. 33.^h 2 Chron. xxvii. 6.ⁱ 2 Chron. xxxix. 35, 36.^k 2 Chron xxx. 18, 19.^l Ezra vii. 10.^m Luke i. 17, 78, 79.ⁿ 1 Cor. xiv. 8.^o Ephes. vi. 15.^p Deut. xxxiii. 25.^q 1 Sam. ii. 9.

If thou prepare thine heart,
And stretch out thine hands toward him ;
If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away,
And let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.^r

Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble :
Thou wilt prepare their heart.^s

The Preparations of the heart in man,
And the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord.^t
How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O Prince's
daughter !^u

Prepare ye the way of the Lord,
Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be exalted,
And every mountain and hill shall be made low ;
And the crooked shall be made straight,
And the rough places plain :
And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
And all flesh shall see it together ;
For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.^v

How beautiful upon the mountains
Are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that
publisheth peace ;
That bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth
salvation ;
That saith unto Zion, " Thy God reigneth ! " ^w

Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way,
Take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my
people.^x

^r Job xi. 13, 14.

^s Ps. x. 17.

^t Prov. xvi. 1.

^u Cant. vii. 1.

^v Isa. xl. 3—5. Luke iii. 4.

^w Isa. lli. 7.

^x Isa. lvii. 14.

I will make the place of my feet glorious.^y
 Go through, go through the gates ;
 Prepare ye the way of the people :
 Cast up, cast up the highway ;
 Gather out the stones ;
 Lift up a standard for the people.
 Behold the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the
 world,
 Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold thy salvation
 cometh ;
 Behold his reward is with him, and his work before
 him.^z
 Give glory to the Lord your God,
 Before he cause darkness,
 And before your feet stumble upon the dark moun-
 tains,
 And while ye look for light,
 He turn it into the shadow of death, and make it
 gross darkness.^a
 Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel ;
 And because I will do this unto thee,
 Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel !^b
 Behold, I will send my messenger,
 And he shall prepare the way before me.^c

A VOICE FROM THE DESERT.^d

A voice from the desert comes awful and shrill,
 " The Lord is advancing—Prepare ye the way ;
 The word of Jehovah he comes to fulfil,
 And o'er the dark world pour the splendour of day.

^y Isa. lx. 13.^b Amos iv. 12.^z Isa. lxii. 10, 11.^c Mal iii. 1. Matt. xi. 10.^a Jer. xiii. 16.^d Luke iii. 4.

“Bring down the proud mountain, tho’ towering to heaven,
And be the low valley exalted on high ;
The rough path and crooked be made smooth and even,
For, Sion ! your King, your Redeemer is nigh.

“The beams of salvation his progress illume,
The lone dreary wilderness sings of her God :
The rose and the myrtle shall suddenly bloom,
And the olive of peace spread its branches abroad.

DRUMMOND.

Doctrinal Instruction.

What is meant by “the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace,” with which the Christian’s feet are to be shod ? or, what grace doth this Preparation, with which we are to be shod, signify ? And why called the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace ? Now what this Preparation is, will best appear, by considering the part it is designed for ; and that is the foot, the only member in the body to be shod ; and the piece of armour it is compared to, and that is the soldier’s shoe, which, if right, is to be of the strongest make, being not so much intended for finery as defence ; and that so necessary, that for want of it alone, the soldier, in some cases, is disabled for service ; as when he is called to march far on hard ways, and those, may be, strewed with sharp stones ; how long will he go, if not shod, without wounding or foundering ? or if the way be good, but the weather bad, and his feet not fenced from wet and cold, they are not so far from the head, but the cold got in them may strike up to that ; yea, bring a disease on the whole

body, which will keep him on his bed when he should be in the field : as many almost are surfeited as slain in armies. Now what the foot is to the body, that the will is to the soul. The foot carries the whole body, and the will the soul ; yea, the whole man, body and soul also. We go whither our will sends us. And what the shoe is to the foot, that Preparation, or, if you please, a readiness and alacrity, is to the will. The man whose feet are well shod fears no ways, but goes through thick and thin ; foul or fair, stones or straws, all are alike to him that is well shod ; while the bare-footed man, or slenderly-shoed, shrinks when he feels the wet, and shrieks when he lights on a sharp stone. Thus when the will and heart of a man is prompt, and ready to do any work, the man is, as it were, shod, and armed against all trouble and difficulty which he is to go over in the doing of it. They say, the Irish tread so light on the ground, that they will run over some bogs, wherein any other almost would stick or sink. A prepared ready heart, I am sure, will do this in a spiritual sense : none can walk, where he can run ; he makes nothing of afflictions, yea, persecutions, but goes singing over them. David never so merry as in the cave,^e and how came he so ? “ My heart is prepared, my heart is prepared,” saith he, “ I will sing and give praise.” If David’s heart had not been shod with this Preparation, he would not have liked his way so well he was in ; you would have had him sing to another tune, and heard him quarrel with his destiny, or fall out with his profession, that had put him to so much trouble, and driven him

from the pleasures of a prince's court, to hide himself under ground in a cave from those that hunted for his precious life. He would have spent his breath rather in pitying and bemoaning himself, than in praising of God. An unprepared heart, that is not well satisfied with its work or condition, hangs back ; and though it may be brought to submit to it with much ado, yet it is but as a foundered horse on a stony way, who goes in pain every step, and would oft be turning out of the path, if bit and whip did not keep him in.

Why is it called the "Preparation of the Gospel of Peace?" Because the Gospel of Peace is the great instrument by which God works the will and heart of man into this readiness and preparation to do or suffer what he calls to. It is the business we are set about, when preaching the Gospel, to make a willing people,^f "To make ready a people prepared for the Lord."^g As a captain is sent to beat up his drum in a city, to call in a company that will voluntarily list themselves to follow the prince's wars, and be in a readiness to take the field, and march at an hour's warning : thus, the Gospel comes to call over the hearts of men to the foot of God, to stand ready for his service whatever it costs them : now this it doth, as it is a "Gospel of Peace." It brings the joyful tidings of peace concluded betwixt God and man by the blood of Jesus ; and this is so welcome to the trembling conscience of poor sinners, who before melted away their sorrowful days in a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation from the Lord to devour them as his adversaries ; that no sooner

^f Ps. cx. 3.^g Luke i. 17.

the report of a peace concluded betwixt God and them sounds in their ears by the preaching of the Gospel, and is certainly confirmed to be true in their own consciences by the Spirit, who is sent from heaven to seal it to them, and give them some sweet gust of it, by shedding abroad the sense of it in their souls; but instantly there appears a new life in them, that they who before were so fearful and shy of every petty trouble, as to start and boggle at the thought of it, knowing it could bring no good news to them, are now "shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace," able to go out smilingly to meet the greatest sufferings that are, or can be, on the way towards them, and say undauntedly to them, as once Christ did to those that came with swords and staves to attack him, "Whom seek ye?" "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God," saith the apostle.^a

The great question is, not how thou mayest escape these troubles and trials, which, as the evil genius of the Gospel, do always attend it; but rather, how thou mayest get this shoe on, thy heart ready for a march, to go and meet them when they come, and cheerfully wade through them, whatever they be, or how long soever they stay with thee? This is a question well becoming a Christian soldier, to ask for armour wherewith he may fight: whereas the coward throws away his armour, and asks whither he may fly. First, Look carefully to the ground of thy active obedience, that it be sound and sincere. The same right principles whereby the sincere soul acts for Christ, will carry him

^a Rom. v. 1.

to suffer for Christ, when a call from God comes with such an errand. "The children of Ephraim being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle."ⁱ Why? what is the matter? so well-armed, and yet so cowardly? This seems strange; read the preceding verse, and you will cease wondering; they are called there, "a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God." Let the armour be what it will, yea, if soldiers were in a castle, whose foundation were rock, and walls brass; yet if their hearts be not right to their prince, an easy storm will drive them from the walls, and a little scare open their gate, which hath not this bolt of sincerity on it to hold it fast. In our late wars we have seen, that honest hearts, within thin and weak works, have held the town, when no walls could defend treachery from betraying trust. Oh labour for sincerity in the engaging at first for God and his Gospel. Be oft asking thy own soul for whom thou prayest, hearest, reformest this practice, and that. If thou canst get a satisfactory answer from thy soul here, thou mayest hope well; if faith's working hand be sincere, then its fighting hand will be valiant. That place is observable,^k "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire," and with other great things that faith enabled them to endure, as you may read in the 34th, 35th, and 36th verses, where I pray note, how the power of faith, enabling the Christian to work righteousness (that is, live holily and righteously)

ⁱ Ps. lxxviii. 9.^k Heb. xi. 33.

is reckoned among the wonders of sufferings, which it strengthens them to endure. Indeed, had it not done this, it never would have endured these.—GURNALL.

Some suppose that the promise, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass,"¹ referred to the productive mines of iron and brass, which abounded in Asher's lot, and were thus continually under his feet: but it has long been interpreted as a proverbial expression; which, indeed, is the most natural and obvious meaning of the words. If a man were about to travel in rough roads, or to climb craggy precipices, or to be stationed upon a slippery eminence, it would be useful for him to have plates, or spikes, of iron, or brass, fixed to his shoes; and, in like manner, the Lord would prepare Asher for every difficulty which he would have to encounter. According to this interpretation, the words, "And as thy days, thy strength," are explanatory of the preceding clause, and signify, that as the day of trial required, strength should be communicated; or, as some expound the passage, "As thy wants, so shall be thy sufficiency." All difficulties are rendered advantageous to true believers; and if their way be rough, their feet shall be "shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace," and their strength in every case proportioned to the emergency.

To stand their ground in difficult, or slippery situations, or to march forward in rugged paths, their feet must be "shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace;" that is, their motives and encouragements to obedience, amidst temptations and persecutions, must

¹ Deut. xxxiii. 25.

be derived from a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the Gospel ; through which God is revealed as "in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," and actually at peace with every believer, notwithstanding past transgressions, and present defects and infirmities. This assurance would make obedience delightful, though self-denying ; and animate the established believer to resist temptation, to endure tribulation, and to march through difficulties and enemies, in the cause of Christ, and in the way to heaven.—SCOTT.

There are many things which the art of war has rendered necessary for the success of an army, besides those rude weapons which an untaught savage would employ ; and though they may be of inferior and subordinate use, still the want of them may prove as fatal as the want of things that are of primary importance. It would have been to little purpose, in some situations, for soldiers to have their vital parts covered with armour, if they had not also shoes, or Greaves, to protect their legs and feet against the sharp stakes that were fixed in the ground to obstruct their progress. That this was a part of armour in the days of old, the sacred history informs us. Goliath had "Greaves of brass upon his legs, as well as a target of brass between his shoulders." And when the irresistible success of the Chaldeans was foretold, it was particularly said, that "the latchet of their shoes should not be broken." In reference to this part of a soldier's accoutrements, the apostle exhorts us to have our feet guarded, and intimates that as the military shoes gave to him who wore them a readiness to march over any obstacles that

might lie in his way, so the "Gospel of Peace" gives to the Christian soldier a "Preparation," or readiness, to prosecute his warfare without halting. This it does, As bringing peace into the conscience ; and, as producing a peaceful disposition in the soul.

The Gospel of Peace gives us a readiness to march, in that it brings peace into the conscience. The Gospel is the one source of peace to sinful man. If he obtain peace from any other source, he "heals his wounds slightly, and says, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace." It is in the Gospel only that a Saviour is revealed. But there we are informed that God's only dear Son became our surety and our substitute. There we behold our adorable Immanuel bearing our sins in his own sacred body upon the tree, and effecting by the blood of his cross our reconciliation with God. Through him peace is proclaimed to a guilty world ; and all who receive into their hearts the record concerning him, have their iniquities blotted out as a morning cloud ; their burdens are from that time removed ; they have "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

Let us look into the Scriptures, and see how prompt for obedience the saints were made by a sense of God's pardoning love. No sooner had a live coal from off the altar been applied to the lips of the prophet Isaiah, in token of his acceptance with God, than he was willing, yea, desirous, to undertake the most difficult and self-denying services. The Thessalonian converts were inferior to none in their attachment to Christ ; and if we inquire what was the source of their distinguished zeal, we shall find that "the gospel had come to them,

not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance ;” and from that moment they became the most eminent followers of Christ and his apostles. It was no easy service which Mary Magdalene performed in washing the Saviour’s feet with her tears ; especially in the presence of such a company ; yet, much having been forgiven her, she loved much ; and therefore testified her love in the best manner she was able, notwithstanding she was likely to meet with nothing but derision and contempt from the proud Pharisee in whose house she was. But on this subject we naturally turn our eyes to the apostle Paul, who “laboured more abundantly” than all the apostles. What the main-spring was of his activity, we are at no loss to determine ; it was “the love of Christ” that constrained him ; he had been redeemed from death by the death of Christ, and, therefore, to Christ he consecrated all his time and all his powers.

A readiness for suffering also arises from the same source. The peace which Moses enjoyed through believing, rendered him so superior to all the pleasures of sense, that he esteemed “the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt,” and “choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.” St. Paul is yet a more illustrious example, as, indeed, might well be expected, considering how exceeding abundant had been the mercy shown towards him. He had already endured far more than any other apostles for the sake of Christ ; yet when the Spirit testified that bonds and afflictions still awaited him where he was going, and the Christians besought him not to proceed on his intended

journey to Jerusalem, he replied, "What mean ye to weep, and to break my heart? for I am willing not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus." And is it not thus also with ourselves? If our souls be animated with faith and love, we shall "count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations;" yea, we shall "rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer shame for the sake of Christ," and the very things which were intended by our enemies for the destruction of the spiritual life, will tend rather to its furtherance and establishment.

The same Preparation for prosecuting our warfare is imparted to us by the Gospel; in that it produces a peaceful disposition in the soul. The soul of man is naturally proud, irritable, vindictive. An injurious act, or an insulting word, is sufficient to call forth all our angry passions, and in many instances creates within us a resentment that can be pacified with nothing less than the blood of the delinquent. Behold David, when Nabal refused to administer to his wants! This one act of churlish ingratitude must be expiated by the life of the offender, and not of the offender only, but of all the males belonging to him; and David himself goes forth to execute the murderous sentence. What an awful picture of human nature does this exhibit! But the Gospel lays the axe to this "root of bitterness," and, by showing us how much we have been forgiven, inclines us to exercise forgiveness. It teaches us to "turn the left cheek to him who has smitten us on the right," and "in nowise to render evil for evil." It enjoins us rather to love our enemies; and, instead of retaliating their injuries, to relieve their wants.

Without this disposition we are but ill-prepared to surmount the obstacles which our subtle adversary will place in our way. The scorn and contempt that we shall meet with will dismay us. Our feelings will be wounded every step we take : and we shall soon be weary of well-doing. In order to judge of the consequences that will ensue if we be destitute of this part of Christian armour, let us only look at the most eminent saints, when, through haste and inadvertence, they had neglected to fasten on their Greaves aright. Moses, the meekest of mankind, was inflamed with wrath ; and by his angry, unadvised words, provoked God to exclude him from the earthly Canaan. Peter, when he beheld his Lord apprehended in the garden, began to fight after the manner of ungodly men, and brought on himself that just rebuke, " Put up again thy sword into his place ; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." St. Paul himself, too, on one occasion, was so irritated with the injustice of his judge that he broke forth into passionate revilings, against his ruler, and governor, and was constrained to apologize for his conduct in the presence of his enemies. If then these holiest of men were thus sorely wounded through their occasional impatience, what advantage will not Satan gain over those whose spirits are altogether lofty and unsubdued ? Doubtless he will harass them in their march till they turn back, and recede from the field of battle.

But let the Gospel have its due effect ; let it render us meek, patient, forbearing, and forgiving ; let it transform us into the image of the meek and lowly Jesus, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again ; and when he

suffered, threaten'd not, but committed himself to Him who judgeth righteously; and the stumbling-blocks that offended us before will appear unworthy of any serious regard. When our enemies persecute us, we shall be ready to weep over them for the evil which they bring upon themselves rather than be incensed against them for the evil they do to us. We shall use no other weapons against them than faith and patience: "being defamed, we shall entreat; being persecuted, we shall suffer it." Instead of being overcome of evil, we shall endeavour to "overcome evil with good;" and by letting patience have its perfect work, we shall be "perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

SIMEON.

THE SOUL PREPARED FOR CONFLICT.

Lo, when dangers closer threaten,
 And thy soul draws near to death,
 When assaulted sore by Satan,
 Then object the shield of faith:
 Fiery darts of fierce temptations,
 Intercepted by thy God,
 There shall lose their force in patience,
 Sheathed in love, and quenched in blood.

Though to speak thou be not able,
 Always pray, and never rest:
 Prayer 's a weapon for the feeble—
 Weakest souls can wield it best.
 Ever on thy Captain calling,
 Make thy worst condition known:
 He shall hold thee up when falling,
 Or shall lift thee up when down.

HART.

The Christian's Standard and Banner.



LOVE.





THE STANDARD.

THE CHRISTIAN'S STANDARD AND BANNER.

LOVE.

He forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled
The imperial Ensign, which, full high advanced,
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich emblazed,
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand Banners rise into the air
With orient colours waving.

MILTON.

Historical Notice.

“EVERY man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own Standard, with the Ensign of their father’s house.”^a It is confessedly a matter of great difficulty to determine what the Standards were which at this early time we find in use among the Israelites. It seems therefore the best course to look in the first instance at the Standards which we find in use among

^a Num. ii. 2.

ancient nations, as furnishing the only materials on which we can found any conjecture or conclusion.

The invention of Standards is attributed by ancient authors to the Egyptians, and this with great probability, as they had the earliest organized military force of which we have any knowledge; we may therefore feel tolerably certain that the Hebrews had the idea of at least the use of Ensigns from the Egyptians, for it is not at all likely that the small body of men which originally went down into Egypt had any such articles, or any occasion for them. Diodorus informs us that the Egyptian Standards consisted of the figure of an animal at the end of a spear. Among the Egyptian sculptures and paintings there also appear other Standards, which either resemble at top a round-headed table-knife, or an expanded semi-circular fan. These latter are attributed to the Græco-Egyptians; but we are unable to find any satisfactory data to shew that they were other than varieties of most ancient Egyptian Standards. The early Greeks employed for a Standard a piece of armour at the end of a spear; but Homer makes Agamemnon use a purple veil with which to rally his men. The Athenians afterwards, in the natural progress which we observe in the history of Ensigns, adopted the olive and the owl, and the other Greek nations also displayed the effigies of their tutelary gods, or their particular symbols at the end of a spear. Some of them had simply the initial letter of their national name. The ancient Persian Standard is variously described. It seems properly to have been a golden eagle at the end of a spear, fixed upon a carriage. They also employed the figure of the sun,

at least on great occasions, when the king was present with his forces. Quintus Curtius mentions the figure of the sun, inclosed in crystal, which made a most splendid appearance above the royal tent. We therefore presume it was the grand Standard, particularly as even at this day, when Mohammedanism has eradicated most of the more peculiar usages of the Persians, the sun continues to divide with the lion the honour of appearing on the royal Standard. Among the very ancient sculptures at Persepolis, we discover specimens of other Standards. One sort consists of a staff terminated in a divided ring, and having below a transverse bar from which two enormous tassels are suspended. The other consists of five globular forms on a cross-bar. They were doubtless of metal, and probably had some reference to the heavenly bodies, which were the ancient objects of worship in Persia. The proper royal Standard of that country, however, for many centuries until the Mohammedan conquest, was a blacksmith's leathern apron, around which they had at one time been rallied to a successful opposition against the odious tyranny of Zohauk. Many national Standards have arisen from similar emergencies, when that which was next at hand being seized and lifted up as a rallying point for the people, was afterwards, out of a sort of superstitious gratitude, adopted either as the common Ensign or the sacred Banner. Thus also originated the horsetails of the modern Turks, and the bundles of hay at the top of a pole which formed the most ancient Roman Standard, as mentioned in the following extract from the Introduction of Dr. Meyrick's splendid work on "Ancient Armour":—"Each cen-

ture, or at least each manipule of troops, had its proper Standard and Standard-bearer. This was originally merely a bundle of hay at the top of a pole ; afterwards a spear, with a cross-piece of wood at the top, sometimes with the figure of a hand above, probably in allusion to the word *manipulus*, and below, a small round or oval shield, generally of silver or of gold. On this metal plate were usually represented the warlike deities, Mars or Minerva ; but, after the extinction of the commonwealth, the effigies of the emperors and their favourites : it was on this account that the Standards were called *numina legionum*, and held in religious veneration. The Standards of different divisions had certain letters inscribed on them to distinguish the one from the other. The Standard of a legion, according to Dio, was a silver eagle with expanded wings, on the top of a spear, sometimes holding a thunderbolt in its claws : hence the word *aquila* was used to signify a legion. The place for this Standard was near the general, almost in the centre. Before the time of Marius, figures of other animals were used. The vexillum, or flag of the cavalry, was, according to Livy, a square piece of cloth, fixed to a cross-bar at the end of a spear." These flags had sometimes fringes and ribands, and were used less restrictedly than Dr. Meyrick seems to state. The divisions of a legion had also their particular ensigns, sometimes simply attached to the end of a spear, but sometimes fixed below the images. An infantry flag was red ; a cavalry one, blue ; and that of a consul white. As the Roman Standard is in the New Testament mentioned distinctly as "the abomination of desola-

tion," we have here noticed them particularly under the general subject. As to the hand on the Roman Standard, we may observe that, at this day, the flag-staff of the Persians terminates in a silver hand, as that of the Turks does in a crescent. After Trajan's conquest of the Dacians, the Romans adopted as a trophy the dragon, which was a general Ensign among barbarians. The dragons were embroidered in cotton, silk, or purple. Mention is also made of *pinne*, which seem to have been aigrettes of feathers of different colours, intended for signals, or rallying points. Animals also, fixed upon plinths, with holes through them, are often found; and were Ensigns intended to be placed upon the ends of spears. In the east, the use of Standards fixed upon cars seems to have been long continued. We have observed that this was an usage in ancient Persia; and, at a period long subsequent, we find it existing among the Saracens. Turpin, in his "History of Charlemagne," mentions it as belonging to them. He says, "In the midst of them was a wagon drawn by eight horses, upon which was raised their red Banner. Such was its influence, that while the Banner remained erect, no one would ever fly from the field." (See Meyrick, vol. i. p. 50.) This custom was afterwards introduced into Europe, and found its way to England in the reign of king Stephen; after which the main Standard was borne, sometimes, at least, on a carriage with four wheels. The main Standard of Henry v., at the battle of Agincourt, was borne thus upon a car, being too heavy to be carried otherwise.

After this rapid glance at ancient Standards, it remains to ask, to which of all these classes of Ensigns

that of the Hebrews approached the nearest ? We readily confess that we do not know ; but the Rabbins, who profess to know everything, are very particular in their information on the subject. They leave out of view the Ensigns which distinguished the subdivisions of a tribe, and confine their attention to the tribe Standards ; and in this it will be well to follow their example. They by no means agree among themselves ; but the view which they most generally entertain is illustrated by the cut prefixed to this Chapter,^b which is in accordance with the prevailing notion among the Jewish interpreters. They suppose that the Standards were flags, bearing figures derived from the comparisons used by Jacob in his final prophetic blessing on his sons. Thus they have Judah represented by a lion, Dan by a serpent, Benjamin by a wolf, etc. But, as long since observed by sir Thomas Browne,^c the escutcheons of the tribes, as determined by these ingenious triflers, do not in every instance correspond with any possible interpretation of Jacob's prophecy, nor with the analogous prophecy of Moses, when about to die. The later Jews were of opinion that, with respect to the four grand divisions, the Standard of the camp of Judah represented a lion ; that of Reuben, a man ; that of Joseph, an ox ; and that of Dan, an eagle ; this was under the conception that the appearances in the cherubic vision of Ezekiel alluded to this division. The Targumists, however, believe that the Banners were distinguished by their colours, the colour for each tribe being analogous to that of the precious stone for that

^b See Pictorial Bible, Num. ii.

^c Vulgar Errors, book v., chap. 10.

tribe, in the breastplate of the high-priest ; and that the great Standard of each of the four camps combined the three colours of the tribes which composed it. They add, that the names of the tribes appeared on the Standards, together with a particular sentence from the law ; and were moreover charged with appropriate representations, as of the lion, for Judah, etc. Aben-Ezra, and other Rabbins, agree with the Targumists in other respects, but put in other representations than the latter assign. Lastly, the Cabbalists have an opinion that the bearings of the twelve Standards corresponded with the months of the year, and the signs of the Zodiac—the supposed character of the latter being represented thereon ; and that the distinction of the great Standards was, that they bore the cardinal signs of Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricorn, and were also charged with each one letter of the tetragrammaton, or quadraliteral name of God. Thus much for Rabbinical interpretation. Most modern expositors seem to incline to the opinion that the Ensigns were flags, distinguished by their colours, or by the name of the tribe to which each belonged. This is certainly as probable in itself as anything that can be offered, unless the instances we have given from the early practice of other nations do not lead to the conclusion that flags were not the earliest, but the ultimate, form which Standards assumed. We have, in most instances, seen them preceded by any object that would serve for a distinguishing mark—such as leather aprons, wisps of hay, pieces of armour, and horse-tails : then by metallic symbols and images, combined sometimes with feathers, tassels, and fringes ; and then plain or figured flags, of silk or linen. Besides, the

interpretation we have cited is founded on the hypothesis that all sculpture, painting, and other arts of design, were forbidden to the Hebrews; and as we are not quite prepared to admit the existence of such a prohibition, we do not feel absolutely bound, unless on its intrinsic probability, to receive an explanation which takes it for granted.—KITTO.

Banner, Ensign, Standard: colours borne in times of war, for assembling, directing, distinguishing, and encouraging the troops. In the wilderness, every tribe of Israel had its particular Standard; and they were again marshalled by three tribes apiece, under the Standards of Judah, Reuben, Ephraim, and Dan. The Saracens reckoned the giving of a Banner, even by a furious and conquering enemy, a sure pledge of safe protection. God's setting up an Ensign to the Assyrians or others, imports his providential leading them forth to chastise his people, and punish his enemies by war and ravage.^d—GURNEY.

Ensigns are warlike Banners, monuments, or trophies of victory.^e "Thine enemies set up their Ensigns for signs." And the prophet Isaiah, threatening the Israelites with an invasion, tells them, that God would "lift up an Ensign to the nations from far."^f He would, by his providence, bring the Assyrians, or the Chaldeans against the Jews; he would, as it were, invite them to list themselves under his colours, as generals use to lift up their Standards for the raising of armies. The same

^d Isa. v. 26; xviii. 8.^e Ps. lxxiv. 4.^f Isa. v. 26.

prophet says, that "there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an Ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek,"^g that is, that Christ the Messiah growing upon the root of Jesse, should mount up, and be advanced, by the preaching of the gospel, to a great height, so as to become a visible and eminent Ensign, which the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, may discern; to whom they should repair, by faith, and in whom they should put their trust.

"Thou hast given a Banner to them that feared thee."^h An army of men united under one Banner, with ability to defend themselves and conquer their enemies; a Banner being a sign of victory, as well as of battle and union. "His Banner over me was Love."ⁱ The Love of Christ displayed, like a Banner, in the gospel, conducted, encouraged, and engaged me to come to him.—CRUDEN.

THE LORD MY BANNER.^k

Our Banner is the Eternal God,
Nor will we yield to fear:
Amidst ten thousand fierce assaults,
His mighty aid is near.
To him the hands of faith we stretch,
And plead experienced grace;
To him the voice of prayer we raise,
Nor will he hide his face.

^g Isa. xi. 10.

^h Ps. lx. 4.

ⁱ Cant. ii. 4.

^k Exod. xvii. 15.

No more, proud Amalek, thy boast,
 "God's arm is feeble grown :"
 His sword shall lop off every hand,
 That dares insult his throne.

Awake, tremendous Judge ! awake,
 Our nation's cause to plead ;
 Nor let thine Israel's foes, and thine,
 By wickedness succeed.

Our fainting hands, how soon they droop !
 But thou the weak canst raise ;
 And in the mount of prayer canst leave
 An altar to thy praise.

DODDRIDGE.

Scripture Illustration.

Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi (The Lord my Banner).¹

And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own Standard, with the Ensign of their father's house : far off about (Marg reading, over against) the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch.

First tribe. — On the east side towards the rising of the sun shall they of the Standard of the camp

¹ Exod. xvii. 15.

of Judah pitch throughout their armies : and Nahshon the son of Amminadab shall be captain of the children of Judah.

Second tribe.—And those that do pitch next unto him, shall be the tribe of Issachar : and Nethaneel the son of Zuar shall be captain of the children of Issachar.

Third tribe.—Then the tribe of Zebulun : and Eliab the son of Helon shall be captain of the children of Zebulun.

Fourth tribe.—On the south side shall be the Standard of the camp of Reuben according to their armies : and the captain of the children of Reuben shall be Elizur the son of Shedeur.

Fifth tribe.—And those which pitch by him shall be the tribe of Simeon : and the captain of the children of Simeon shall be Shelumiel the son of Zuri-shaddai.

Sixth tribe.—Then the tribe of Gad : and the captain of the sons of Gad shall be Eliasaph the son of Reuel.

Then the tabernacle of the congregation shall set forward with the camp of the Levites in the midst of the camp : as they encamp, so shall they set forward every man in his place by their Standards.

Seventh tribe.—On the west side shall be the Standard of the camp of Ephraim according to their armies : and the captain of the sons of Ephraim shall be Elishamah the son of Ammihud.

Eighth tribe.—And by him shall be the tribe of Manasseh : and the captain of the children of Manasseh shall be Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.

Ninth tribe.—Then the tribe of Benjamin: and the captain of the sons of Benjamin shall be Abidan the son of Gideoni.

Tenth tribe.—The Standard of the camp of Dan shall be on the north side by their armies: and the captain of the children of Dan shall be Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.

Eleventh tribe.—And those that encamp by him shall be the tribe of Asher: and the captain of the children of Asher shall be Pagiel the son of Ocran.

Twelfth tribe.—Then the tribe of Naphtali: and the captain of the children of Naphtali shall be Ahira the son of Enan. They shall go hindmost with their Standards.

And the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses: so they pitched by their Standards, and so they set forward, every one after their families, according to the house of their fathers.^m

We will rejoice in thy salvation,
And in the name of our God we will set up our Banners.ⁿ

Thou has given a Banner to them that feared thee,
That it may be displayed because of the truth.^o

He brought me to the banqueting-house,
And his Banner over me was Love.^p

Thou art beautiful, O my Love, as Tirzah,
Comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with Banners.^q

^m Numb. ii. 1.

ⁿ Ps. xx. 5.

^o Ps. lx. 4.

^p Cant. ii. 4:

^q Cant. vi. 4.

And he (the Lord) will lift up an Ensign to the nations
from far,

And will hiss unto them from the end of the earth.^r

And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse,
Which shall stand for an Ensign of the people :

To it shall the Gentiles seek ;

And his rest shall be glorious.—

And he shall set up an Ensign for the nations,

And shall assemble the outcasts of Israel,

And gather together the dispersed of Judah

From the four corners of the earth.^s

And they shall be as when a Standard-bearer fainteth.^t

Lift ye up a Banner upon the high mountain,

Exalt the voice unto them, shake the hand.^u

All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the
earth,

See ye, when he lifteth up an Ensign on the mountains;

And when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.^v

Thus saith the Lord God,

Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles,

And set up my Standard to the people.^w

When the enemy shall come in like a flood,

The spirit of the Lord shall lift up a Standard against
him.^x

Blow ye the trumpet in the land :

Cry, gather together, and say,

Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the defenced
cities.

Set up the Standard toward Zion.—

^r Isa. v. 26.

^s Isa. xlii. 2.

^t Isa. xi. 10, 12.

^u Isa. xviii. 3.

^v Isa. lix. 19.

^w Isa. x. 18.

^x Isa. xlix. 22.

How long shall I see the Standard,
And hear the sound of the trumpet ?^r

Declare ye among the nations,
And publish, and set up a Standard :
Publish, and conceal not.^z

Set up the Standard upon the walls of Babylon,
Make the watch strong, set up the watchmen,
Prepare the ambushes :
For the Lord hath devised and done
That which he spoke against the inhabitants of Babylon.
Set ye up a Standard in the land,
Blow the trumpet among the nations,
Prepare the nations against her ;
Call together against her the kingdoms
Of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz ;
Appoint a captain against her,
Cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillars.^a

And the Lord their God shall save them
In that day as the flock of his people :
For they shall be as the stones of a crown,
Lifted up as an Ensign upon his land.^b

THE STANDARD OF THE SPIRIT.^c

Almighty Spirit, raise thine arm,
And lift the Saviour's Standard high ;
Thy people's hearts with vigour warm,
And call thy chosen legions nigh.

^r Jer. iv. 5, 6, 21.

^a Jer. i. 2.

^c Jer. li. 12, 27.

^b Zech. ix. 16.

^c Isa. lix. 19.

Waked by the wellknown voice they come,
And round the sacred Banner throng :
Zion, prepare the conqueror room,
While triumph bursts into a song.

DODDRIDGE.

Doctrinal Instruction.

THE Israelites encamped in four grand divisions, with the tabernacle in the centre ; yet at some distance from it, as a token of awe and reverence. The sanctuary and the ark, as pledges of Jehovah's special favour, were in reality the glory and defence of the people ; yet the people were stationed, as if they had been the guardians of the sanctuary, and no enemy could approach it without forcing their way through the hosts. Religion is, indeed, our protection ; yet it is our duty to support its cause and interest, with our whole power and ability. This encampment is computed to have formed a movable city of twelve miles square : and many think that the door of every tent faced the tabernacle, that thence the people might worship towards this token of God's presence upon a mercy-seat. We know nothing certain concerning the Standards of the several tribes : but it is highly improbable that they should have been the figures of any animals, as the Jewish writers assert : for this might have proved an occasion to idolatry, and indeed it was deemed unlawful in after ages.

The Lord is a God of order and of peace ; and he

commands that all things in his church should be done "decently and in order ;" and "that all things be done in peace." It would be well, if, in attempting to accomplish the former purpose, according to their own idea of decency and order, all denominations of Christians had not too much lost sight of the latter injunction. It is desirable that real Christians should be of one judgment : but if that cannot be obtained, it is of great importance that they be of one heart ; and that, like these four squadrons of Israel, they should live in harmony with one another : and in their different encampments surround the ark, as all of one family, embarked in one common interest, and marching to the same heavenly Canaan : and that they be upon their guard against the suggestions of those enemies, who would persuade them to quarrel about their different Ensigns, and to draw the sword of war against their brethren ; instead of being valiant for the truth, and against the common enemies of their religion. Then would the church be "comely, and terrible as an army with Banners ;" and not the less so, for being divided into different squadrons, encamped or marched separately : provided each division vied with all the others, which should be most zealous for the cause of God and truth, and most careful to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."—Let, then, "brotherly Love continue:" and may the Lord prosper the attempts, and increase the numbers, of those who endeavour "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace !"

David, as anointed by God, and advanced to the throne, was a Banner given to the pious remnant of

Israel : and it was displayed, that they might resort to it, and under his authority and command, expect the performance of the Lord's faithful promises, and the triumphing of his truth. In this, especially, he was a type of Christ, and his kingdom and salvation. Blessed be God, "he hath given a Banner," in the cross of Christ, to those who fear his name; that resorting thither, and receiving mercy, they may enlist under him who now fills the mediatorial throne, and so wage successful war against the enemies of their souls. Oh may this Banner be everywhere displayed, that all nations on the face of the earth may embrace the truth, and experience the faithfulness of God to his promises !

When the gospel began to be publicly preached, the Divine Saviour, as springing from the root of Jesse, and as crucified for sinners, ascended into heaven, and, being exalted to the mediatorial throne, stood as an Ensign to which the chosen people of God resorted. The Gentiles sought to him as their Lord and Saviour ; and the rest of soul, which they found by trusting in him, was connected with the glory and beauty of holiness, and an earnest of the glory of heaven. Or rather, the Saviour, would rest with full complacency in his redeemed people, chiefly from among the Gentiles, in whom his name would be exceedingly glorified. By embracing the Christian religion, we enlist under the Standard of the cross of Christ : that by our profession of his truth, by our good works, and our fervent prayers, we may obtain peaceful conquests over our enemies, by winning them over to our side, and inducing them to have fellowship with us. Of old, the Banner

was displayed, and both Jews and Gentiles sought unto it, and found a glorious rest to their souls, by trusting and obeying the King of saints. For us the same Ensign is erected and exhibited: may we also thankfully flock to it, and share these blessings. And while we expect the Lord to set to his hand again, to gather his ancient people from their dispersions, and to bring them home to his church; and also to bring in the fulness of the Gentiles, when all parties will cease from envy and strife, and be united in holy Love: let us trust in his glorious power to remove out of the way all the hindrances to our complete salvation; let us tread in the highway of holiness, which he has made for his redeemed: let us wait "for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life;" and let us expect that the Lord will prepare our way through death, that river which separates this from the eternal world, that we may "pass over dry-shod:" even as he dried up the Red Sea, and Jordan, when "he brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness," to give them the land of Canaan for their inheritance.

Christ is "the Author and Finisher of our faith," as well as the Ransom for our sins. He brings the soul to seek and enjoy the comforts, that are communicated through his ordinances, which are as a "banqueting-house" where his saints feast with him. When the Standard is erected, and the Banner displayed, the soldiers resort to it, and by keeping near to it perform their duty to their leader, and best consult their own safety. "The Love of Christ," manifested in his humiliation unto death, is the Banner which he displays by

his word. To this the believer resorts, and by it is directed and encouraged ; and thus he obtains the benefits of salvation, is animated to resist every enemy, and finds effectual protection. The Lord Jesus has prepared the feast, by the sacrifice of his death upon the cross ; and his ordinances are appointed, that we may in them partake of it : and the same Love which allures us to him, and protects in communing with him, animates us to venture and suffer for his sake ; and with that Banner before our eyes, or over our heads, we shall valiantly encounter and surely overcome all our enemies.

All the real excellence and holiness on earth centres in the church. She is said to be "terrible as an army with Banners." But the church of God, when beautified in holiness, and united in love, is very terrible to her enemies. Each believer, in his proper place, is the soldier of Christ, enlisted under his banner, and a part of his army ; by which he goes forth subduing his enemies, and rendering his truth triumphant over error and iniquity : whilst every one of them gains daily victories over the world, the flesh, and the devil. The magnificent palace, the holy temple, and "the army terrible with Banners," are faint emblems of the comeliness and honour of the church, and of true believers. They are all enlisted under one commander, and arranged under his Banners : they are well disciplined and armed, and courageous in faith and hope : and they fight assured of victory ; yet this consists with the greatest lowliness, meekness, and Love ; and their victories are chiefly gained by faith and prayer, by patience and integrity, by holy lives, and the faithful

preaching of the word: and if these do not change their enemies into friends, they will be more awfully destructive to them than the most terrible weapons of war.

In answer to the hopes and prayers of the Old Testament church, the anointed King of God's people came in the appointed season: he was heard in the day of his trouble; his sacrifice was accepted; his intercessions have prevailed; his kingdom has been set up, and we are called to partake of its blessings. Thanksgivings for these benefits should be constantly rendered. In "his salvation let us rejoice," under him let us enlist, and in his name set up our Banners. But we ought to recollect, that we belong to a large army, and we should not only seek and rejoice in hope of personal triumphs, but pray also for the success of the common cause; and look for the accomplishment of the Redeemer's whole counsel, when his dominion over willing subjects shall be extended throughout the earth. —SCOTT:

Christ's Love is compared to a Banner displayed in a banqueting-house. While he opens his word to his people; while he admits them into covenant union, and entertains them with special intimacy, with himself; how his love engages and draws their hearts to his service; and excites, encourages, strengthens, distinguishes, directs and protects them in their spiritual conflicts with Satan, the world, and their lusts! Thus let me fight with principalities and powers, and with spiritual wickedness in high places.

Christ is compared to a Standard, Ensign, or Banner.

The elevation of him in his person, his faithfulness, and love, in the ancient council of peace ; in the Old Testament promises and types ; in his incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and glory ; in the gospel revelation, and saving discovery of his excellency, is God's great signal of war with sin, with Satan and the world ; and of his victory over them ; and of our peace with God, with our conscience, with holy angels and good men : it is the grand means of dispiriting Satan and his allies, and of gathering and enlisting us to Jesus himself, the great means of exciting, encouraging, and directing us in our spiritual conflicts, and enabling us to obtain complete victory therein. He is represented as a Standard-bearer among ten thousand. In the above manner, and for the mentioned purposes, he lifts up himself, and goes before his people in their spiritual war. Be thou, my soul, "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

The Scriptures resemble a banqueting-house, where the guests are embannered with Jesus' Love. By bringing into the spiritual knowledge thereof, what stores of reposed blessings he discovers ! How sweetly he feasts, refreshes, strengthens, and animates, to the spiritual warfare, and his Love, which is better than wine ! Gospel-ordinances are called a banqueting-house, or house of wine. What rich stores of everlasting Love, and Divine consolations, are contained in them ! And how oft therein are the saints refreshed, and ravished with the fulness of God !

The saints are compared to soldiers. In the day of power, enlisted under Jesus' Banner ; brought into the bond of his covenant ; clothed with the livery of his

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imputed righteousness, his implanted grace, and of an holy conversation ; armed with the whole armour of God, with the Girdle of truth, with the Breastplate of righteousness, the Shoes of settled gospel-principles, the Shield of faith, the Helmet of the hope of salvation, the inspired Sword of the Spirit, and the Artillery of all prayer ; which they are to keep undamaged, and ready on every occasion. It is theirs to distinguish themselves from others ; to moderate their affections and care about worldly things ; to cease from their former sinful and legal labours ; and with singleness of heart, with prudence, patience, submission, courage, care, and activity, to follow the Captain of their salvation, in their respective stations ; to know his word ; without hesitation obey his command ; endure hardship ; espy the stratagems, watch the motion of spiritual enemies ; improve every advantage against them ; show no pity to any of them ; but by means of Jesus' death, believed with application, resist Satan ; crucify and kill the body of sin, with its affections and lusts. Ye soldiers of the Lamb ! " be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might ; " encourage yourselves in your Leader, in the certainty of your victory, and the reward of your warfare. Never desert your Divine, your gracious Commander, nor his Standard of truth. Never yield to a spiritual foe ; " resist the devil, and he will flee from you ; " resist unto blood, striving against sin : count not your life dear unto you, that you may finish your course with joy ; " fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." Though your enemies be many, be strong, and lively ; there are more with you, than with them ; stronger is he that is in you, than he that

is in the world. Be then the day of war, the season of my soul.—BROWN, of *Haddington*.

We should go forth in the strength of the Lord, and guard against pride, and vain confidence. Let us wait upon him by faith and prayer, to give us strength and courage for our Christian work and warfare ; remembering our own weakness, and the insufficiency of every creature, let us pray that God would give us help from trouble. Whatever be our strength, courage and resolution : it is he that must tread down our enemies ; and if we take to ourselves the whole armour of God, and maintain a humble, believing dependence upon him, he will shortly bruise Satan under our feet, and we shall be more than conquerors through him who hath loved us. We are taught not to trust in our military preparations in times of danger and war, but in the Lord. Pride and confidence in our military strength has been too much the character of our country. We have often talked arrogantly of our soldiers and navies ; and God has often, by terrible things in righteousness, shown us the vanity of that confidence. Finally : let us often pray for one another, especially for those in danger or distress, in spiritual troubles, or spiritual desertions, in the suitable language of this Psalm, xx. 1, “The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble ; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee.”—BOOTHROYD.

The church is terrible to the enemies with whom she is to fight under the Banner of Christ’s gospel and Love ; having the weapons of her warfare, “not carnal,

but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." So Israel was a "people saved by the Lord, the shield of their help, and who was the sword of their excellency." God did put the dread of them, and the fear of them upon the nations, under the whole heaven. who heard the report of them and trembled. The people heard, and were afraid : sorrow took hold on the inhabitants of Palestina ; the dukes of Edom were amazed ; the mighty men of Moab, trembling took hold upon them ; all the inhabitants of Canaan melted away ; fear and dread fell upon them.^d The church again is said to be "terrible as an army with Banners : " for the Banner lifted up, is a sign of fighting with joy and victory, as in Psalm xx. 6. " We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our Banners." So Christ's Banner over her, signified his defence, and the victory which he giveth over all her enemies, sin, Satan, and the world, also the sign, that as all soldiers do camp under their own Standards,^e so she under the gospel, the Ensign of Christ's Love towards her ; that Love wherewith Christ has loved us ; wherefore some read it thus, "his Standard was Love towards me." By Love the church is redeemed ; by it, "everlasting consolation is given us, and "good hope through grace."^f "And hope maketh not ashamed ; because the Love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us."^g—AINSWORTH.

^d Exod. xv. 14. 16.^f 2 Thess. ii. 16.^e Numb. ii. 2.^g Romans v. 5.

THE CAPTAIN OF THEIR SALVATION. ^h

The Saviour leads his people on,
To combat and to conquest leads ;
The soldiers and their Chief are one,
The fruit is theirs, and his the deeds.

His royal Banner when he waves,
A shout is heard through all his host :
The arm is then displayed that saves,
The arm in which his people boast.

They shrink not from the conflict then,
Though timid and though feeble too ;
His people quit themselves like men,
With confidence they meet the foe.

His arm, they know, sufficient is,
Though foes unnumbered should appear ;
They know the people that are his
May follow him, and nothing fear.

They smile at danger when they see
Their Chief advance to meet the foe ;
A surer pledge of victory
His presence is, than sword or bow.

At sight of him, opposing hosts
Are filled with terror and dismay ;
His presence quells the loudest boasts,
By him his people win the day.

^h Hebrews ii. 10.

And when the mortal strife is past,
The peace and joy of heaven succeed ;
'Tis peace that will for ever last,
'Tis joy unmixed, 'tis joy indeed.

KELLY.

The Christian's Artillery.



PRAYER.



ARTILLERY.



ARTILLERY.

THE CHRISTIAN'S ARTILLERY.

PRAYER.

Have I not heard great ordnance in the field ?
And Heaven's Artillery thunder in the skies ?

* * * * *

I'll to the Tower with all the haste I can,
To view the Artillery and ammunition.

SHAKESPEAR.

He that views a fort to take it,
Plants his Artillery 'gainst the weakest place.

DENHAM.

Historical Notice.

Artillery is originally a French word signifying "archery." In a general sense, it denotes the offensive apparatus of war, particularly of the missile kind ; and in modern acceptation, is more immediately applied to fire-arms mounted on carriages, and ready for action, with their balls, bombs, grenades, etc. In a more extensive meaning, the term includes the powder, matches, utensils of ordnance, the machines which facilitate their motion, and transport them, the vehicles over

which they traverse rivers, everything necessary to them, and all that enters into the form of a train of Artillery. The same word, still further extended in its meaning, likewise comprehends the men destined for the service of the Artillery; the people who provide the Artillery with materials and implements when engaged; the cannoniers, the bombardiers, the officers of every rank, and engineers of every kind. By Artillery is likewise understood the science which the officers of Artillery ought to possess.

In the most ancient times, when war was made with quickness and impetuosity, the use of Artillery was unknown. Something like military engines seem hinted at in the book of Deuteronomy, "Thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee, until it be subdued."ⁱ But the earliest precise mention of Artillery is in the second book of Chronicles,^k where we are told, that Uzziah, who began his reign eight hundred and nine years before the Christian era, "made in Jerusalem engines invented by cunning men, to be upon the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal." This also is particularly mentioned by Josephus who represents Uzziah's care of Jerusalem as towards the end of his reign.

The Greeks, who were desirous of appropriating to themselves every improvement of science they gathered from the east, would fain have been believed the inventors of Artillery. But so far from being in possession of Artillery, they had not in their early times, if we may judge from Homer's writings, one military engine

ⁱ 2 Deut xx 20.

^k 2 Chron. xxvi. 15.

that was calculated to shake a wall. The earliest in profane history is probably to be sought for in the siege of Motya, about three hundred and seventy years before Christ, where Dionysius, having battered the fortifications with his rams, advanced to the walls towers rolled upon wheels, whence he galled the besieged with continued volleys of arrows and stones thrown from his catapults.¹ The next memorable instance that occurs is the siege of Rhodes by Demetrius Poliorcetes, where even Grecian ingenuity was exhausted in the invention and improvement of Artillery.^m Another instance of notoriety occurs when Hannibal besieged Saguntum, two hundred and nineteen years before the Christian era; and the Saguntines hindered his soldiers from using the battering-ram, by an incessant hurling of darts, stones, and other missile weapons. See the account in Livy,ⁿ who has also supplied us,^o with a curious inventory of the warlike engines which Scipio, eight years afterwards, found among the stores of Carthage. There were no less than a hundred and twenty catapults of the larger size, two hundred and eighty-one of the smaller; of the greater balistæ twenty-three, of the lesser fifty-two; besides an innumerable quantity of scorpions of different sizes, arms, and missile weapons. Two years, however, previous to this, Marcellus had laid siege to Syracuse, a city proverbially fatal to the arms that attacked it. Archimedes was at that time resident in Syracuse; and at the earnest solicitation of Hiero, king of Sicily, exerted

¹ *Anc. Univ. Hist.* vol. vi. p. 401.

ⁿ *Livy*, l. 21, chap. vii., edit. French.

^m *Diod. Siculus*, l. 20.

^o l. 26. ch. xlvi. 47.

the powers of his mind in the invention of Artillery and other warlike engines. Marcellus had brought with him an amazing engine called *sambuca*, upon eight galleys : which the mathematician destroyed by discharging single stones of enormous weight upon it, while it was a considerable distance from the walls. The chief instruments he used were *balistæ*, a sort of crow lowered by a lever, which, hoisting the ships of the Romans by the prow, plunged them to the bottom of the sea ; grapples, and scorpions. Archimedes, however, left no account of these military engines in writing, because he considered all attention to mechanics as mean and sordid, placing his whole delight in those intellectual speculations which, without any relation to the necessities of life, have an intrinsic excellence, arising from truth and demonstration only ; and reckoning such inventions but among the amusements of geometry.^p

The credit of introducing Artillery into our own country must undoubtedly be given to the Normans, whom William of Malmesbury describes^q as having a peculiar delight in war, and assures us that they excelled in all the arts of attacking their enemies ; when their forces were sufficient. The Normans first introduced among our castles the keep, placed upon a mount, whence they annoyed the surrounding enemy with their darts, stones, and other offensive weapons.^r Their method of attacking castles seems generally to have been by mere force ; blockade was little practised ;

^p See the Life of Marcellus in Plutarch.

^q l. 3. p. 57.

^r Strutt's Manners and Customs of the English, vol. 1. p. 93.

and the iron ram, which the Romans found so serviceable, was rendered in a great measure useless by the deep ditches which surrounded their fortifications. The principal machines which the Normans employed, were of course of the projectile kind; and they were not only used in regular sieges, but occasionally so contrived as to be used on ship-board.*

Machines for throwing stones occur so early as in the battle of Hastings; and Robert de Brunne, in his wars against the Saracens, informs us, that when Richard the First set out against the Holy Land, he had in his barges and galleys, mills turned by the wind, which, by force of the sails, threw fire and stones.

The benefit which the English manners derived from the Crusades, is a topic on which we shall not here enlarge; but the accessions to the knowledge of our ancestors in the art of war were singularly conspicuous. From the Saracens they obtained a sort of wild-fire of so subtle a composition, that there was no method of extinguishing it but by smothering it by heaps of dust or vinegar. It was by this device that the Black Prince set fire to Remorentine; and it was often thrown in pots from the catapulta.

The Greek and Roman writers afford us many instances of the superior force which the catapulta and balistæ of the ancients could occasionally display; nor are parallel instances wanting in the annals of Britain. Camden informs us, that with the mangonels, trebuches, and briccolas, our forefathers used to cast forth mill-stones: and Holinshed † relates, that when Edward the

* See Matt. Paris, p. 1091.

† Ibid. p. 539.

First beseiged Strively Castle, he caused certain engines of wood to be raised against it, which shot off stones of two and three hundred weight.

The connexion between the modern and the old Artillery need hardly be prefaced by recapitulating the discovery of gunpowder. For some time after that singular composition was applied to military purposes, the machines and pieces of ordnance were very ponderous and unwieldy, and of course unfit for expeditious service. Military people, at that time, possessed but a small share of learning of any kind, and almost none at all of a mechanical or mathematical nature. What they did in their profession was entirely the effect of practice. The form of their Artillery, as well as of the warlike engines and instruments for conducting it, was only such as the most obvious hints suggested, or the rudest and most uncultivated invention dictated. Their first pieces were not only clumsy and unmanageable, but as they succeeded to the machines of the ancients, they were employed like them in throwing stones of a prodigious weight ; and, therefore, were necessarily of an huge and enormous bore, consisting usually of pieces of iron fitted together lengthways, and hooped with iron rings. Some of them were so large that they could not be fired above four or five times a day. Such were those with which Mahomet II. battered the walls of Constantinople in 1453, being some of the calibre of no less than twelve hundred pounds ; and Guicciardine, in the first book of his history, informs us, that so large a portion of time intervened between the different chargings and dischargings of one of those pieces, that the besieged had sufficient time to repair at their leisure

the breaches made in their walls by the shock of such enormous stones.

After such a relation, we cannot be surprised to find that not only the movable towers, but catapults of various descriptions, were retained in use. The extreme awkwardness visible in the construction of cannon, and the great cost of gunpowder, adding to the difficulty of procuring it, account for the preference which was still given to the old engines for discharging stones. Henry v. in the fourth year of his reign, employed the tripget, which shows that cannon had not then superseded the old Artillery."

Under Henry III. of France, the use and practice of Artillery was not advanced beyond its infancy. D'Etrees, who occupied the post of Master-General of the Ordnance, in 1558, at the siege of Calais by Francis, duke of Guise, and who eminently contributed to its capture, was the first person among the French who made any considerable progress in the construction of batteries. Anterior to D'Etrees, continual accidents took place from the bursting of cannon; and it was customary to cool them with vinegar, in order to prevent misfortunes, Armies were then but slenderly provided with Artillery, which was considered as more requisite for sieges, than indispensable for the operations of the field. In England, however, the science of Artillery had occupied attention at a more early period; and lord Herbert observes, that in 1544, king Henry VIII. had himself invented small pieces of Artillery to defend his wagons.

The length and diameter of cannon were by degrees

* Strutt's *Manners and Customs*, vol. ii. p. 32.

much diminished, and of course their weight; and practice and experience in time discovered how much might be reduced with propriety from their magnitude, without hurting the grand effects which it was necessary on some occasions they should produce.

Dr. Smith observes,^v that the great change introduced into the art of war by the invention of fire-arms, has enhanced still farther both the expense of exercising and disciplining any particular number of soldiers in time of peace, and that of employing them in time of war. Both their arms and their ammunition have become more expensive. A musket is a more expensive machine than a javelin, or a bow and arrows; a cannon or a mortar, than a balista or a catapulta. The powder which is spent in a moderate review is lost irrecoverably, and occasions a very considerable expense. The javelins and arrows which were thrown or shot in an ancient one, could easily be picked up again, and were besides of very little value. The cannon and the mortar are not only much dearer, but much heavier machines than the balista or catapulta, and require a greater expense, not only to prepare them for the field, but to carry them to it. As the superiority of the modern artillery too, over that of the ancients, is very great, it has become much more difficult, and consequently, much more expensive, to fortify a town so as to resist, even for a few weeks, the attack of that superior Artillery. In modern times, many different causes contribute to render the defence of society more expensive. The unavoidable effects of the natural progress of improvement have, in this respect, been a good deal enhanced

* Wealth of Nations, vol. iii p. 70.

by a great revolution in the art of war, to which a mere accident, the invention of gunpowder, seems to have given occasion.—REES'S CYCLOPÆDIA.

PRAYER.

WHAT various hindrances we meet
In coming to a mercy-seat !
Yet, who that knows the worth of Prayer,
But wishes to be often there.

Prayer makes the darkened cloud withdraw,
Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw ;
Gives exercise to faith and love,
Brings every blessing from above.

Restraining Prayer we cease to fight,
Prayer makes the Christian's armour bright ;
And Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.

While Moses stood with arms spread wide,
Success was found on Israel's side ;
But when through weariness they failed,
That moment Amalek prevailed.

Have you no words! Ah! think again,
Words flow apace when you complain,
And fill your fellow-creature's ear,
With the sad tale of all your care.

Were half the breath thus vainly spent,
To Heaven in supplication sent,
Your cheerful song would oftener be,
"Hear what the Lord has done for me."

COWPER.

S

Scripture Illustration.

AND Jonathan gave his Artillery unto his lad, and said unto him, "Go, carry them to the city."^w Thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee, until it be subdued.^x Uzziah prepared for them throughout all the host, shields, and spears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows, and slings to cast stones. And he made in Jerusalem Engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal.^y For thus hath the Lord of hosts said, "Hew ye down trees, and cast a mount (marg. reading, Pour out the Engine of shot) against Jerusalem."^z Behold the mounts, (marg. reading, Engines of shot) they are come unto the city to take it; and the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans, that fight against it, because of the sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence.^a He shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field: and he shall make a fort against thee, and cast a mount against thee, (marg. reading, Pour out the Engine of shot) and lift up the buckler against thee. And he shall set Engines of war against thy walls, and with his axes he shall break down thy towers.^b

And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, "Let me

^w 1 Sam. xx. 40.^x Deut. xx. 20.^y 2 Chron. xxvi. 14, 15.^z Jer. vi. 6.^a Jer. xxxii. 24.^b Ezek. xxvi. 8, 9.

go, for the day breaketh." And he said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." And he said unto him, "What is thy name?" And he said, "Jacob." And he said, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."^c All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in Prayer, believing, ye shall receive.^d Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.^e Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.^f Continuing instant in Prayer.^g For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.—Praying always with all Prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.^h In every thing by Prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.ⁱ Continue in Prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.^k Pray without ceasing.^l The effectual fervent Prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.^m

^c Gen. xxxii. 24—28.

^f Rom. viii. 26.

ⁱ Phil. iv. 6.

^d Matt. xxi. 22.

^e Rom. xii. 12.

^k Col. iv. 2.

^m James v. 16—18.

^g Luke xviii. 1.

^h Eph. vi. 12, 18.

^l 1 Thess. v. 17.

The end of all things is at hand : be ye therefore sober,
and watch unto Prayer.^a

THE POWER OF PRAYER.

In themselves as weak as worms,
How can poor believers stand,
When temptations, foes, and storms,
Press them close on every hand ?
Weak, indeed, they feel they are,
But they know the throne of grace ;
And the God who answers Prayer,
Helps them when they seek his face.

Hezekiah on his knees,
Proud Assyria's host subdued !
And when smitten with disease,
Had his life by Prayer renewed.
Peter though confined and chained,
Prayer prevailed and brought him out,
When Elijah prayed, it rained,
After three long years of drought.

We can likewise witness bear,
That the Lord is still the same ;
Though we feared he would not hear,
Suddenly deliverance came.
For the wonders he has wrought,
Let us now our praises give ;
And by sweet experience taught,
Call upon him while we live.

NEWTON.

^a 1 Peter iv. 7.

Doctrinal Instruction.

WE have now set before you the Christian in his armour: and he wants nothing to furnish him for the battle, or enable him for the victory, but the presence of his General to lead him on, and bring him honourably off again, by his wisdom; which, that he may obtain, the apostle sets him to Prayer—— “Praying always with all Prayer and supplication in the Spirit.” As if he had said, You have now, Christian, the armour of God; but take heed you forget not to engage the God of this armour, by humble Prayer, for your assistance, lest for all this you be worsted in the fight. He that gives you the arms, can only teach you to use them, and enable you to overcome. I am not ignorant that some make Prayer a piece of armour, and reckon it as a part of the Panoply. It matters not much in what notion we handle it, whether as a distinct piece of armour, or as a duty and means necessarily required to the use of our armour. The latter I shall follow, partly because it hath no piece of material armour allotted to it for a resemblance; as also, by the connexion it hath with the whole discourse of the armour, it seems to be superadded as a general duty influential upon all the pieces before named, and may be read with every piece: take the girdle of truth, praying with all Prayer, etc.; having on the breast-plate of righteousness, praying with all Prayer, etc. The Christian’s armour will rust except it be furbished with the oil of Prayer. What

the key is to the watch, Prayer is to our graces : it winds them up, and sets them going.

Prayer is a necessary means, with our other armour, for our defence. The first reason is taken from the co-ordination of this duty, with all other means for the Christian's defence, and that by Divine appointment. He who bids us take the girdle of truth, breast-plate of righteousness, etc., commands us also not to neglect this duty. Now, what God joins, we must not sever. The efficacy of co-ordinate means lies in their conjunction. The force of an army lies not in this troop, or that one regiment, but in all the parts in a body. And if any single troop or company shall presume to fight the enemy alone, what can they expect but to be routed by the enemy, and punished by their general also ? Let not any say, they use this means, and that ; if any one be willingly neglected, the golden chain of obedience is broken. And as to a good action, there is required a concurrence of all the several ingredients and causes ; so to make a good Christian, there is required a conscientious care to use all appointed means : he must follow the Lord fully, not to make here a balk, and there a furrow. It is not the least of Satan's policy, to get between one duty and another, that the man may not unite his forces, and be uniform in his endeavour. There are few so bad as to use no means, and not many so faithful to God, and themselves, as conscientiously to use all. One pretends to sincerity, and dares appeal to God that he means well, and his heart is good ; but for the breast-plate of righteousness, it is too heavy and cumbersome for him to wear. Another seems very just and righteous, so that he

would not wrong his neighbour, no, not one penny, to gain many pounds ; but as for faith in Christ, this he never looks after. A third boasts of his faith and hope, as if he did not doubt of his salvation ; but as for the word of God, that should beget and increase it, he cares not how seldom he looks on it at home, or hears it in public. And a fourth, he hath this to say for himself, that he is a constant hearer, his seat at church is seldom found empty, and at home the Bible is often in his hands ; but as for Prayer, his closet bears witness against him, that he seldom or never performs it. This half-doing will prove many a soul's undoing.

Prayer, like Jonathan's bow, (when duly qualified as to the person and act,) never returns empty. Never was faithful Prayer lost at sea. No merchant trades with such certainty, as the praying saint. Some Prayers, indeed, have a longer voyage than others ; but then they come with the richer lading at last. In trading, he gets most by his commodity that can do without his money longest. So the Christian that can with most patience stay for a return of Prayer, shall never be ashamed of his waiting. The promise insures an answer to his Prayer.^o Oh, who can express the powerful oratory of a believer's Prayer ! This little word, "Father," lisped forth in prayer by a child of God, exceeds the eloquence of Demosthenes, Cicero, and all other famed orators, We read of taking heaven by force ;^p If ever this may be said to be done, it is by Prayer, saith Tertullian. We knock at heaven, and the merciful heart of God flies open, which we bring away with us. The same speaks of Christians, how

^o 1 John iii. 22.

^p Matt. xi. 12.

they went to pray, as an army doth to besiege a town, and take it by storm : and then adds, This holy violence that we offer to God in prayer, is very pleasing to him. Surely, if it were not, he would neither help the Christian in the work, nor reward him for it when done ; whereas he doth both. He helped Jacob to overcome ; “By his strength he had power with God ;”^a that is, not by his own, but the strength he had from God. And then he puts honour upon him for the victory ; “Thy name shall not be called Jacob, but Israel ; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.”^r It were easy here to enter into a large history of the great exploits which Prayer is renowned for in holy writ. This is the key that hath opened and shut heaven. It hath vanquished mighty armies ; and unlocked such secrets, as passed the skill of the devil himself to find out. It hath strangled desperate plots in the very womb wherein they were conceived ; and made those engines of cruelty, prepared against the saints, recoil upon the inventors, so that they have inherited the gallows which they set up for others. At the knock of Prayer, prison doors have opened, the grave hath delivered up its dead, and the sea’s Leviathan, not able to digest its prey, hath been made to vomit it up again. It hath stopped the sun’s chariot in the heavens, yea, made it go back. And that which surpasseth all, it hath taken hold of the Almighty, when on his full march against a people, and put him to a merciful retreat. Indeed, by the power Prayer hath with God, it comes to prevail over all the rest. He that hath a key to God’s heart cannot be

^a Hosea xii. 3.^r Gen. xxxii. 28.

shut out, or stopped at the creature's door. Now, Prayer moves God, and overcomes him, not by causing any change in the Divine will, and making God to take up new thoughts of doing that for his people which he did not before intend. No ; God is immutable : and what good he doth in time for his people, he purposed before time was. But, Prayer is said to do more than overcome God, because he then gives, what from eternity he purposed to give upon their praying to him. For when God decreed what he would do for his saints, he also purposed they should pray for the same : "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them."*—GURNALL.

The inward principle of grace is represented as an armed warrior.^t Dreadless of danger, secure against death, it continually seeks the ruin of, and by earnest desire after holiness, by warm opposition of inward lust, by resistance of temptation, and study of discomformity to carnal men, it fights against sin, Satan, and the world. It is armed with the Girdle of Divine truth, which applied to the heart, renders it strong and active ; with the Girdle of inward truth, and sincerity of soul, which girds up the loins of the mind, and makes it candid and sober ; with the Breastplate of imputed righteousness, which repels the horrid accusations of Satan, secures from condemnation and death ; and of faith and love, which render our soul courageous and safe. Armed with the Shoes of gospel truth, a firm establishment in the principles of which, qualifies to run alertly, regularly, and fearlessly, in the field of spiritual warfare :

* Ezek. xxxvi. 37.

^t Ephes. vi. 10—18.

with the shining, solid, and impenetrable Shield of faith, especially of the Divine perfections, as embraced and improved by faith, to defend the whole man, and to repel and return on Satan himself, the fiery, fearful, swift, flying, and dangerous darts of his seduction : with the Helmet of salvation and hope thereof, to ward off deadly, stupifying, and confounding blows of temptation or trouble. Armed with the Mail-coat, and armour of universal holiness and righteousness, on the right hand, and on the left, to damp the heart of every opposer : with the Artillery of all Prayer and dependence on God, and with the Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, whereby our conscience is convinced ; our corruptions wounded ; temptations, errors, and heresies, solidly refuted and ruined.—BROWN, of *Haddington*.

If we would indeed put on, and successfully use, the whole armour of God, we must likewise pray always by the Spirit, with great earnestness and importunity, and watch thereunto with all perseverance : thus we shall be made more than conquerors through him that loved us ; but in no other way. We should also consider all the saints, wherever they live, as fellow-soldiers in our spiritual warfare, though divided into different battalions, distinguishable by a few unimportant externals : and we must help them all with our supplications : for general success against the powers of darkness, the kingdom of Satan, as well as personal victory, should be our noble ambition : but all Christians are bound in a peculiar manner to pray for the ministers of the gospel, as they are exposed to the especial rage of the enemy ; when they fall, it is “ as when a standard-

bearer fainteth," and their honourable conduct is of the greatest importance to the triumph of the gospel. Those ministers especially, who are exposed to great hardships and perils in their work, have particularly a claim to the Prayers of their brethren. For the ambassadors of peace from the Lord to his rebellious creatures, have often been cast into prison, and put to death as criminals. It is peculiarly desirable, that utterance should be given them in perilous situations, that they may boldly declare the mystery of the gospel: for the more boldly they speak, in consistency with the meekness of wisdom and love, the better do they perform their work. Men of this stamp rather desire to make full proof of their ministry, than to enjoy personal ease or liberty: their own affairs are inconsiderable in their judgment, compared with the success of the gospel.—SCORR.

It is graciously ordained of God that none of his creatures should be independent of him; however richly they may be furnished with either gifts or graces, they are under the necessity of receiving continual supplies from him, and of acknowledging him, from day to day, as the one source of all their benefits. Hence, in addition to the armour with which the Christian is arrayed from head to foot, it is necessary that he wait upon God in Prayer.

It is by Prayer that we must obtain the armour provided for us. No one part of the Divine Panoply can be formed by an arm of flesh: from the first infusion of faith and hope into the soul, to the perfect transformation of the soul into the Divine image in righteous-

ness and true holiness, all is of God. He is the only Giver of every good and perfect gift ; and all his children in all ages have acknowledged their obligations to him in this view. The evangelical prophet confesses, " Thou hast wrought all our works in us ;" and to the same effect the great apostle of the Gentiles speaks : " He that hath wrought us to the selfsame thing is God." But how must this armour be obtained from God ? Hear his own direction : " Ask, and ye shall receive ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Desirous as he is to impart unto us all spiritual blessings, " he will yet be inquired of" by us, that he may bestow them on us as the reward of importunity. Not that he needs to be informed of our wants, for " he knoweth what things we have need of before we ask ;" nor needs he to be prevailed upon by the urgency of our request, for he is far more ready to give than we are to ask, and he stirs us up to ask because he had before determined to give : but there is a propriety in this Divine appointment : it necessitates us not only to feel our wants, but to confess our inability to relieve ourselves : it compels us to acknowledge God as the one Source of blessedness to man, and to adore him for everything we receive at his hands. It cuts off from us all possible occasion of glorying, and obliges us, when most completely armed to say, " By the grace of God I am what I am."

It is by Prayer that we must learn how to use this armour aright. Men are disciplined to the use of arms : it is not deemed sufficient to clothe them with armour, they must also be taught how to guard themselves

against the assaults of their adversary, and at the same time to inflict on him a deadly wound. Such instruction must the Christian receive from God. If he lean to his own understanding, he will as surely be foiled as if he trust in his own strength, or go unarmed to the field of battle. Many are the devices of the wicked one, of which the uninstructed Christian cannot be aware. He alone to whom all things are naked and open knows his plots, or can put us sufficiently on our guard against them. He alone can tell us when, and where, and how to strike. With him alone is that wisdom that is profitable to direct. But if we call upon him, he will guide us by his counsel: he will "give us a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of counsel and of might, a spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, and will make us of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord." He will inform us of the designs of our enemy, and show us how to counteract them. And though in ourselves we be unskilful in the word of righteousness, yet he will give us the tongue of the learned, and the arm of the mighty: he will fight in us, as well as for us; and will give us reason to adopt the grateful acknowledgments of that renowned warrior, "Blessed be the Lord, my strength, who teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight." Still, however, must this be sought of him in Prayer. His promise is suspended on this condition, that we pray to him for the performance of it: on our fulfilling this duty, he will interpose; he will be very gracious unto us at the voice of our cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer us: and then it is that our ears shall hear a voice behind us, saying, "This is the

way, walk ye in it." We must first acknowledge him, and then he will direct our paths.

It is by Prayer that we must bring down the Divine blessing on our endeavours. Many noble purposes are formed in the minds of unregenerate men, which yet are "as the grass upon the house-tops, which withereth afore it groweth up: wherewith the mower filleth not his hand; nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom." Nor is it any wonder that those efforts should be blasted which are undertaken without a reference to God, and which, if they succeeded, would confirm men in a conceit of their own sufficiency. God is a jealous God, and his glory will he not give to another. Hence he is interested, as it were, in disconcerting the plans of those who disregard him, and in prospering the concerns of those who humbly implore his aid. Agreeably to this, we find in the sacred records, that the most powerful armaments and best concerted projects have been defeated when God was not acknowledged, and that the weaker have triumphed gloriously when they sought the Divine favour and protection. In one instance, more particularly, we see the Prayer of faith blended with human exertions, and it was made manifest, for the instruction of that and all future generations, that whatever means God himself might use, Prayer was the most powerful of all weapons. When the hands of Moses hanged down through weariness, Amalek prevailed over Israel; but when he held up his hands, Israel prevailed over Amalek; so that, in fact, it was the Prayer of Moses, rather than the Sword of Joshua, that gained the victory. It is in this way also that we must vanquish our spiritual enemies. We must fight against them in-

deed, and seek their utter destruction ; but our reliance must be altogether upon God, whose blessings we must obtain in a way of Prayer. In vain shall we attempt to combat Satan in any other way. He laughs at an arm of flesh, and yields to Omnipotence alone. To him may be justly applied that lofty description of Leviathan ; “ Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons, or his head with fish-spears ? Behold, the hope of him is in vain : shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him ? His scales are his pride, shut up together as with a close seal. His heart is as firm as a stone ; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether mill-stone. The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold : the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon. He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood. Darts are counted as stubble ; he laugheth at the shaking of the spear. He is a king over all the children of pride.” But Prayer he cannot withstand : the man who fights upon his knees is sure to vanquish him ; and the weakest Christian in the universe, if he has but a heart to pray, may say with David, “ I will call upon the Lord who is worthy to be praised : so shall I be saved from mine enemies.”—SIMEON.

THE CHRISTIAN WRESTLING.*

HARK, 'tis a martial sound !

To arms, ye saints, to arms !

Your foes are gathering round,

And peace has lost its charms ;

Prepare the Helmet, Sword, and Shield,

The trumpet calls you to the field.

* Ephes. vi. 12.

No common foes appear
To dare you to the fight,
But such as own no fear,
And glory in their might ;
The powers of darkness are at hand :
Resist, or bow to their command.

An arm of flesh must fail
In such a strife as this ;
He only can prevail
Whose arm immortal is :
'Tis Heaven itself the strength must yield,
And weapons fit for such a field.

And Heaven supplies them too ;
The Lord who never faints
Is greater than the foe,
And he is with his saints :
Thus armed they venture to the fight,
Thus armed they put their foes to flight.

And when the conflict's past,
On yonder peaceful shore
They shall repose at last
And see their foes no more ;
The fruits of victory enjoy,
And never more their arms employ.

KELLY.

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